

COLUMN

Clinton jam session becomes bootleg recording

WASHINGTON (AP) — A recording of President Bill Clinton's saxophone session at a Prague club is being marketed by a mail order firm as a bootleg compact disc, with no connection to the White House. The unauthorized recording, including Clinton and his band, was sold by a New York City recording company. The first song he plays is "I Wanna Dance with Somebody," but the second song he plays is "Billie Jean." Clinton's saxophone playing was recorded by a New York City resident, who said he had heard that Clinton was in Prague. Clinton's saxophone playing was recorded by a New York City resident, who said he had heard that Clinton was in Prague. Clinton's saxophone playing was recorded by a New York City resident, who said he had heard that Clinton was in Prague.

Clinton leaves their mark on Asia

JAKARTA (AP) — At least 10 Indonesian families have named their newborn babies after U.S. President Bill Clinton, who visited the country last week for a summit with Indonesian President B.J. Habibie. The Clinton family name was chosen by families in Jakarta, Medan, and Surabaya. The Clinton family name was chosen by families in Jakarta, Medan, and Surabaya. The Clinton family name was chosen by families in Jakarta, Medan, and Surabaya.

Jilted lover tries to immolate girl

RABAT (AP) — A Moroccan man poured kerosene over his 15-year-old daughter and set her on fire in a suicide attempt to avenge her rejection of his marriage proposal. The man, who was 40, was arrested after the girl was taken to a hospital. The man, who was 40, was arrested after the girl was taken to a hospital. The man, who was 40, was arrested after the girl was taken to a hospital.

Ukrainian banknotes used as toilet paper

CHERNOBYL (AP) — A Ukrainian newspaper reported that some of the country's poorest residents were using 100,000-drachma banknotes as toilet paper. The newspaper said that the banknotes were so worthless that they were being used as toilet paper. The newspaper said that the banknotes were so worthless that they were being used as toilet paper.

Dog prices crash as Beijing mulls exorbitant fees

BEIJING (AP) — The price of dogs in China has plummeted since the government announced it would charge exorbitant fees for dog registration. The price of dogs in China has plummeted since the government announced it would charge exorbitant fees for dog registration. The price of dogs in China has plummeted since the government announced it would charge exorbitant fees for dog registration.

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Crown Prince meets Hurd, Rifkind

LONDON (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan was Monday the guest of honor at a lunch hosted by British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. Prince Hassan and Mr. Hurd discussed the latest developments in the Middle East peace process and Europe's role in supporting it. The talks also dealt with Jordanian-British relations and issues of common interest. British Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind hosted a dinner in honor of the Crown Prince, who is currently on a private visit to the United Kingdom. Prince Hassan and the defence secretary discussed bilateral relations in political and defence fields.

Mubarak sees 'fertile land for terrorism'

LONDON (AFP) — The Gaza Strip and Jericho risk becoming "a fertile land for terrorism," that could spread to Europe unless the West helps Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat reduce tensions among his people, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak warned here Monday. "Fundamentalism everywhere in the world who are earning money from terrorism, from the Arab World, Europeans, everywhere, they are going to gather there," he said in an interview with the BBC World Service's News Hour. "And they are going to be financed by those who are against the present situation. And terrorism will start and it will spread out and it will be very dangerous. It is not far away from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, so we have to be very careful," Mr. Mubarak, who met with Prime Minister John Major at the start of an official two-day visit, said donor nations needed to do more than give money to the territories under Palestinian autonomy, they need to help manage its use.

2 Israeli soldiers wounded in Lebanon

MARIYOUN (AP) — Guerrillas clashed in artillery and mortar duels with Israeli troops and allied militiamen in South Lebanon Monday. Security sources said two Israeli soldiers were wounded after Hizbollah guerrillas attacked an Israeli position in Tallouk in the central sector of a border enclave Israel occupies in South Lebanon. The security sources said the two Israelis suffered shrapnel injuries and were evacuated by truck clinics to northern Israel. The sources said another outpost manned by Israeli's proxy militia in the village of Qantara, some 200 meters from Tallouk, was the target of a separate mortar attack by Hizbollah militiamen. Israeli troops and their surrogate South Lebanon Army militiamen struck back with howitzer fire on Hizbollah hideouts and escape routes facing the enclave's central sector, according to the sources.

'Iranian hostages tortured to death'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Three Iranian diplomats and a news photographer were tortured and then murdered following their abduction during Lebanon's civil war, a Tehran newspaper said Monday. The Iranian International denied Iran's official version the four were still alive in its editorial about the Beirut trial of Samir Geagea, the former head of the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia, on charges of murdering fellow Christians. The three diplomats and a photographer with the official Iranian news agency IRNA and their Shiite Muslim Lebanese driver went missing at an LF checkpoint in north Lebanon on July 4, 1982. "The hostages were murdered, burnt alive, cut to pieces. There is no way they could still be alive," the English-language daily said.

Fateh flexes muscles in Gaza amid efforts to shore up truce

Arafat orders probe into clashes but Hamas insists he own up responsibility

GAZA (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Monday appointed a five-member judicial commission of inquiry to probe Friday's clashes in Gaza which left 16 Palestinians dead. Efforts meanwhile continued on arriving at a truce accord between the Palestinian self-rule authority and Islamic militants. Arafat loyalists fired into the air and chanted against Muslim activists during a rally of over 10,000 people that Mr. Arafat billed a referendum in support of peace with Israel. Islamic leaders, burying the 16th victims of factional fighting, branded the rally a provocation likely to hurt a branded truce worked out by Israeli Arab mediators. Ordinary Gazans nervously watched public displays of firepower from both sides, fearing the impoverished strip is on the brink of civil war. "We support democracy, but we need security and stability to build our state," Mr. Arafat told roaring sup-

porters in a downtown Gaza City square. "We will not allow anyone to sow disorders and we will not allow anyone to destroy what we have built," he said. Mr. Arafat is seeking broader public backing following the bloody clashes outside a Gaza City mosque between his police and Islamic activists opposed to negotiating with Israel. About 200 supporters of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, marched in the funeral procession of the 16th victim, Ata Kanan, 25, who died Monday of gunshot wounds in the head. "Arafat is a killer. Instead of shooting at Israelis, he is shooting at our sons," his father Mohammad, 58, said, tears streaming down his face as the body was lowered into a grave next to 10 of the other victims. At the rally, Mr. Arafat, clearly elated by a crowd larger than the one that materialized for his arrival five months ago, encouraged supporters to tear down a

force and come within metres of the stage. Before his speech, members of the Fateh Hawks, the underground armed band that had fought the Israeli occupation, circulated in the crowd wearing masks and firing their weapons in the air. Police occasionally joined in the firing. Mr. Arafat's support among Fateh loyalists had been shaky in the Gaza Strip because he ignored street fighters when assigning key jobs in the autonomy government. Resurrecting them appeared to be an attempt to both shore up his own flank and to distance the ordinary police from the fight with the furtive Izzeddine Al Qassam underground of Hamas. "Arafat, Arafat we love you, no one can challenge you," the crowd chanted and "Izzeddine will not scare us because we have Fateh Hawks." Izzeddine Al Qassam said in a leaflet distributed in Gaza that it would attack self-rule officials and start a civil war unless those re-

sponsible for bloodshed Friday were tried and executed. Palestine National Authority (PNA) police, untrained in riot control, opened fire on stone-throwers outside the Palestine Mosque, an Islamic militant centre. Aside from the deaths, the clash and further rioting left 200 wounded. Ordinary Gazans were clearly distraught by the turn towards violence. "What happened on Friday will happen again and again if all these weapons are not collected," said taxi driver Salameh Yajzi, 30. "It is a bad sign. We are heading towards a civil war that will only serve Israeli interests." The tension between the two sides also was reflected in graffiti. "Arafat-Goldstein" said a wall slogan, comparing the PNA president to the Jewish settler who massacred more than 30 Palestinians at a Hebron Mosque in February. Graffiti outside Hamas leader Mahmoud Zahar's house signed by Fateh said:

(Continued on page 3)

Israel wins U.S. assurances of aid

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin won assurances Monday from President Bill Clinton on continued assistance in funds and backing amid the latest outbreak of violence in the Middle East. "I reaffirmed my support for current aid levels as well as certain security assistance," Mr. Clinton said at the White House with Mr. Rabin on day two of the Israeli leader's four-day visit here. Mr. Clinton said he had also guaranteed continued financing for the Arrow anti-missile system which the Israeli Aircraft Industries is developing. The United States currently pays for some 75 per cent of the Arrow project, which was part of the scrapped Star Wars programme. Mr. Rabin thanked the president for his support and said Israel would continue negotiations with its Arab neighbours, but he did not mention the recent crisis sparked by Friday's clashes between Palestinian police and demonstrators which left 16 dead. "I am sure that without the United States' involvement and support under the leadership of President Clinton it would be much more difficult to achieve this progress in the peace process," he said. President Clinton also said Monday he was open to the idea of U.S. participation in a peacekeeping force on the Golan Heights. Mr. Clinton said he thought the United States had to continue to support Israel's security because it was a "precondition" for Israel being able to make peace with all its neighbours in the Middle East. Mr. Clinton said there had been no discussion yet between Israel and Syria of U.S. forces in any peacekeeping role on the Golan Heights, the territory that Syria wants Israel to return in exchange for peace. But, he said that if asked, he would make the case for U.S. participation to the U.S. Congress. "If we are asked by the parties themselves to become involved sometime in the future I will come to the Congress ... and make the case," Mr. Clinton said. Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, indicated recently he opposed such participation. But Mr. Clinton, in an apparent reference to Mr. Helms' statement, said, "I don't think I should say or do

Kuwait and Russia sign cooperation deals

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Kuwait and Russia signed five agreements to bolster cooperation in various fields, Russian Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin announced Monday as he wound up official talks in the oil-rich emirate. Mr. Chernomyrdin, the first Russian prime minister to visit Kuwait, told reporters the agreements would encourage and protect joint investment in other areas such as scientific research, culture, commerce and the mass media. "Russia has changed and we are changing too," said Mr. Chernomyrdin. "We have become more open for representatives of this area ... I am sure that Kuwaiti businessmen will effectively and intensely take part in executing the major investment projects in the commonwealth of Russian states." He reiterated his country's support for Kuwait and assured his hosts that Moscow will "continue its efforts that aim at the implementation of all Security Council resolutions." Last month, Russia's foreign minister helped defuse the latest crisis in the Gulf that was sparked by Iraq's troop buildup near Kuwait. The U.S.-led allies rushed reinforcements to the region to prevent a repeat of the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Baghdad later agreed to withdraw its troops and drop its historic claims to Kuwait in return for a Russian pledge to campaign for easing the four-year-old sanctions that have been stifling its economy. Iraq still has to release 600 Kuwaiti war prisoners that Kuwait says are still held in its jails since the seven-month occupation and pay reparations for damages it caused the emirate. "We have supported and we will continue to support the Kuwaiti people," said Mr. Chernomyrdin. He said his delegation also discussed issues related to "military cooperation and weapons purchases," but did not elaborate. Kuwait signed a 10-year defence pact with Russia in November 1993. Its small military has bought BM-30 Smerch rocket launchers from Russia, and other deals are in the pipeline. Mr. Chernomyrdin met with the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, his



HIS MAJESTY King Hussein Monday the Jordanian-Israeli peace negotiations greets Minister of Information Jawad and members of the various committees to Anani at a lunch the King hosted at that process which culminated in the Basman Palace in honour of the head and signing of the peace treaty between the members of the Jordanian delegation to two countries on Oct. 26 (Petra photo)

King honours peace negotiators

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday hosted a lunch at Basman Palace in honour of the head and members of the Jordanian delegation to peace negotiations with Israel and members of the various committees related to the negotiations. Ben Shaker, the King's military secretary and Royal Palace officials. Dr. Faysal Tarawneh who led the Jordanian negotiating team to the talks with Israel (see photo) spoke to Jordan Television after the lunch paying tribute to the King for designating him and his colleagues to work as soldiers serving the nation. "We have done the job in implementation of the King's directives and sought to serve the national causes," said Dr. Tarawneh. "Jordanians are all indebted to King Hussein for the return of the Jordanian territory and water resources as they were indebted to the late King Abdullah and King Talal for their efforts in serving the Jordanian people and the Arab Nation." Attending the lunch was Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid

Majali returns, describes Doha talks as highly fruitful

Joint statement underlines shared views, calls for enhanced ties, cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali returned home after a three-day visit to Qatar and described the outcome of his talks there as very positive and the visit as extremely successful. "My discussions with the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani, and other leaders proved that Qatar and Jordan hold identical views in various domains," he said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra. "The talks covered means to bolster inter-Arab relations, the employment of Jordanian workers in Qatar and other issues of common concern," said Dr. Majali, stressing that Jordan's relations with the Gulf states were improving after the end of the 1990-91 Gulf crisis. Describing Jordanian-Qatari relations as excellent in all fields, Dr. Majali said he was carrying a message of affection and appreciation from the Emir of Qatar to His Majesty King Hussein and Qatar's congratulations on the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty on Oct. 26. Dr. Majali said Qatar and Jordan agreed on the need for restoring solidarity among Arab states "in view of the very sensitive developments in the region." Upon the conclusion of Dr. Majali's visit to Qatar, a joint communique was issued in Doha and Amman voicing the two countries' support for the Middle East peace process and expressing desire to see progress achieved on the Syrian-Israeli and the Lebanese-Israeli tracks. The two countries pledged support for all efforts for a just and comprehensive peace that would end the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the Madrid conference and U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which call for the exchange of land for peace and

Sexual harassment of women in public — time to speak out

Special to the Jordan Times

THE YOUNG woman, dressed in an Islamic garment which covers her body entirely, smiles at me with a mixture of astonishment and pity. "No, this never happens to me, never," she insists. Her friend, unveiled, nods, adding that "it only happens to those who provoke it, but not to us."

"Of course it happens, all the time," contends another university student. She wears a headscarf and a long skirt. "The lack of politeness and education does not distinguish between veiled and unveiled women." But, she continues, "you know, it is difficult for us to talk about it — because it is always the woman who will be blamed, not the man."

Sexual harassment of women in public is evidently a subject all but easy to talk about, although a considerable amount of

women, foreign and Jordanian alike, feel disturbed by it and consider it a limitation to their freedom of moving in public. "Of course some will maintain that raising the subject gives a bad image of Jordan," says Samira, a student of history at the University of Jordan. "But I think we should be strong and self-assured enough to speak openly about our good and bad sides."

Many women underline that the majority of men behave decently, but that the minority which harasses women is big enough to make them feel uneasy in public. "They stare at you, they talk, they walk behind you, close up and try to touch you with their shoulder," says Samira. "It never ends. They ask: What is this yellow, what is this red? They comment on my dress, my perfume, my glasses, even my books — everything."

Single male car drivers, stopping beside her when she walks to the bus stop, get on Samira's nerves, but groups of young and middle-aged men driving around by car are particularly annoying, she says. "They drive very slowly while you're walking along, offering you a ride, sweets and often more than that. No way to chase them away. Once a man got off the car and followed me all the way to Shmeisani. I felt extremely uncomfortable."

It is difficult to assess the dimension of sexual harassment against women in Jordan. Sexual harassment is punishable according to law No. 320 of Jordan's penal code, which forbids any enforced physical approach or insult of either women or men in public, the maximum sentence being a fine of JD50 or six months of imprisonment. But although a small percentage of sexual harassment cases are reported to

police, official data from the criminal investigation department were not available upon request. Scientific studies about sexual harassment in public do not exist so far, although efforts to collect relevant data have been made. In 1993, a sociologist from the University of Jordan, carrying out a research on working women, drew up a questionnaire which included a question about sexual harassment in the workplace. "When we submitted the questionnaire to the authorities for approval, this question was not cleared, saying this phenomenon did not exist in Jordan," says Arwa Al Amiri, a professor of experimental psychology at the University of Jordan, who supervised the study. Meanwhile, journalistic research proves that female students and working women are particularly subject to sexual harass-

ment in public. An article published recently by the Jordanian weekly Al Ufiq (Horizon) quoted a number of female secretaries as saying that they had been harassed by their male employers. Some said they had been offered an increased salary for special services, others said their employers had asked them to put on weight to be "more beautiful" or to use a certain type of make-up or dress. "I once went for a job interview," says a 23-year-old secretary who works with a private company. "The boss asked me if I was ready to stay overtime. He also asked me to take a shower every morning before I go to work. When I left, he slapped me on the back. Of course, I did not take the job."

Many people, including women, tend to consider secretaries "loose women," ready to do anything for money. In fact, a majority

of the women questioned by Al Ufiq said they would quit their job if they did not need the money so badly. Asma Khader, head of the Jordanian Women's Union, estimates that half of all working women get harassed at one time or another. "But I am sure that not even five per cent of all cases are reported to police and much less are taken to court," she says. If sexual harassment is reported at all, Ms. Khader adds, it is rarely the woman herself who takes legal action, but rather a third party who has witnessed the attack, be it verbal or physical. Female university students say that harassment outside campus is more frequent than inside. But due to the strong gender segregation still prevalent in some parts of Jordanian society and in many schools, university is often the first time that men mix with women on a regular

basis. "Sometimes a male student will stare at you in class, rather than listen to what the professor says," says Amal, a second-year law student. "When you signal to him that you dislike it, he won't stop. On the contrary, in many cases he will continue staring even more audaciously." Asked by a psychology professor why men do approach women like this, a number of male university students answered "because the girls like it." Indeed, it is often not easy to draw the line between a flirt and harassment. "Within a certain range, the same action can either be interpreted as harassment or as a flirt," says Haya Dajani, a sociologist working at a private research institute. "Sexual harassment is to some extent a relative concept. Whether a male-female in-

(Continued on page 7)

Peace not yet a watershed for Palestinian agriculture

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israeli exploitation of water sources in the West Bank coupled with restrictions placed on Palestinian use of water have severely curtailed the options of the Palestinians in developing agriculture, their mainstay vocation, an Amman meeting was told Monday.

Erratic rains have become the main source of water for the Palestinian farming community in a land once known as one of the most fertile in the Middle East, Palestinian experts told a seminar entitled "Optimisation of Water in Agriculture."

The experts, representing institutions not affiliated with the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho, presented a very bleak picture of the agricultural situation in the West Bank, more than one year after the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel signed their historic autonomy agreement.

Shawkat Sarsour, an agriculture engineer with the Jerusalem-based Palestine Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC), a non-governmental voluntary agency, briefly outlined the main features of agriculture in the West Bank. But, he explained, most of the figures he cited were estimates since the Palestinians had little means to collect more accurate data under occupation.

Mr. Sarsour said the total area of Palestinian land Israel occupied in the 1967 war, including Jerusalem, was 6,440 square kilometres, and the Jewish state has either

confiscated or declared 53 per cent of this area as closed zones.

The total area of cultivated land in the West Bank is 175,000 hectares (1,750,000 dunums) and in the Gaza Strip 18,000 hectares (180,000 dunums), he said.

Agriculture accounts for about 20 per cent of the Palestinians' gross domestic product (GDP) and employs one fifth of the Palestinian labour force. The bulk of the agricultural land is rainfed, a natural result of the denial or restricted access to water for irrigation purposes.

The overall features of the land, the different climates, the availability of experienced personnel and, above everything, the Palestinians' attachment to their land make it highly possible that in a state of freedom of options and access to water, the Palestinians would be able to develop their farming sector quite well, Mr. Sarsour said.

"The lack of water poses one of the major obstacles for expanding the areas of irrigated land since water monitoring and planning is linked directly to the Israeli occupation authorities," said Mr. Sarsour.

According to Mohammad Al Tourshani, another PARC engineer, Israel is using about 80 per cent of the replenishable water in the West Bank to serve Israeli towns and cities while denying the Palestinians any right to dig new wells and limiting the amount of water that the Palestinians could pump from existing wells.

"Excessive digging by Israel also affects the productivity of springs," another

source of water for the Palestinians, and increases the salinity of water available from the springs, Mr. Sarsour said.

Many of the water wells in the Jordan Valley have been closed by the Israelis citing "security reasons," he said.

Figures made available to the Jordan Times showed that the West Bank holds water resources that could safely yield around 600 million cubic metres of water every year but the 1.2 million Palestinians in the West Bank get about 120 million cubic metres per year. The 120,000 settlers the West Bank consume 65 million cubic metres and Israel pumps the rest to beyond the "green line."

The per capita consumption of water among Israeli Jews is 13 times more than the Palestinians in the West Bank, which meets 25 per cent of the Jewish state's overall water needs.

Seven-fifths per cent of water used in Israel (1,700 million cubic metres per year) is consumed by the agricultural sector (1,275 million cubic metres) while the Palestinian farming community uses 57 per cent (70 million cubic metres) of its total annual water consumption (123 million cubic metres) for agriculture.

Israel uses five per cent for industrial purposes (85 million cubic metres) while the Palestinian use four per cent (five million cubic metres).

Domestic consumption in Israel (340 million cubic metres) accounts for 20 per cent of the Jewish state's annual use while the Palestinians use 39 per cent (48

million cubic metres).

As a result of Israeli curbs, the Palestinians, despite the fertility of their soil, have come to depend on Israel for most of their needs of agricultural production, said Mr. Tourshani.

The Palestinians also depend on Israel for more than 80 per cent of their needs of fertilisers and pesticides used in agriculture, and the increased prices of these items in Israel also raises the cost of agricultural production in the West Bank to relatively higher levels but still cheaper than Israel itself.

Palestinian produce sales to Israeli buyers who pay higher prices result in shortages in the West Bank, said Mr. Tourshani.

In view of the present situation, which will hopefully be addressed in the final status negotiations between the PNA and Israel, the Palestinians have to look for options that include the use of wastewater after treatment, building small dams, shifting agricultural patterns to less water-consuming crops and using modern irrigation methods, Mr. Sarsour said.

No significant studies have been made of the options; nor is any estimate of the costs involved.

The PARC was established in 1982 by a group of Palestinian agricultural engineers who sought to offer what they could to improve the agricultural situation in the West Bank. It maintains offices in many towns in the West Bank and depends on returns from cooperative projects and external aid.



FLEXING MUSCLES: Supporters hail Yasser Arafat during a demonstration in Gaza City on Monday. More

than 15,000 people turned up to cheer Mr. Arafat, firing festive shots in the air (see page one) (AFP photo)

Gazans slip further into poverty

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Poverty has deepened in the Gaza Strip since self-rule began six months ago, creating a powderkeg situation that helps explain Friday's explosion of violence in the territory.

Fifteen people were killed in clashes in Gaza City between the fundamentalist group Hamas, which opposes peace with Israel, and police of the new Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

The hard economic times, says Palestinian economist Samir Abdallah, "can only favour extremists and opponents of the peace process."

One of the main problems is Israel's periodic closure of the territory, as was the case after a suicide bombing attack in downtown Tel Aviv last month killed 23 people.

The sealing of the Strip prevents tens of thousands of Palestinians who work in Israel from reporting for their low-paid jobs. Only 14,000 residents of the strip are now allowed to work in Israel, down from more than 50,000

last year. The Israeli punishment is all the more painful for Gazans because half of the Strip's revenue comes from Palestinians who work in Israel.

"The middle class is becoming the proletariat, and it is essential to fight unemployment, but we are still waiting for investment," said another economist, Salah Abdul Shafi.

Western countries have pledged \$700 million in development aid for this year but have delivered only \$100 million, partly out of concern over the PNA's ability to run the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

The two areas became autonomous in May under the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord signed in September of last year.

"The lack of money has delayed the start of job-creating development projects and in paying the 9,000 members of the new Palestinian police force, who for three months have received

only a small part of their salary," said Abdallah, a member of a Palestinian economic development commission.

To make things worse, wealthy Palestinians living abroad are wary of investing because of the unstable situation in Gaza.

The United States said the violence Friday was an alarm signal showing the desperate need for the promised aid funds to be disbursed.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak also painted a grim picture. "In Gaza there are no jobs, no infrastructure, no health care. If it continues, no one will be able to convince people to remain calm," he said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres echoed this view, saying Sunday that economic development through international aid was the only way to fight what he called terrorists.

The health situation has become so precarious that cholera broke out recently, and authorities have reported 45 cases so far.

Palestinian and international relief organisations say they are having an increasingly hard time meeting the demand for assistance. The World Food Programme, a U.N. agency, says that since July it has dealt with 28,000 cases of people in abject poverty, providing them with flour, rice and sugar.

"Poverty no longer touches only the families of workers who cannot make their living in Israel any more, but also farmers," one programme official said.

Hazem Sarraj, an official responsible for distributing aid collected from Muslim charities, estimated that 60,000 Palestinian families were living below the poverty level.

"We are overwhelmed because we can only subsidise 2,000 needy families," he said.

In recent months, the U.N. refugee agency dealing with the Palestinians has added 12,000 families to its list of emergency aid recipients.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudis pray for rain after delay

DUBAI (R) — Prayers for rain in an unusually parched Saudi Arabia were held throughout the mostly desert kingdom after sunrise on Monday, the Saudi news agency said. King Fahd urged Saudis last week to pray for rain "due to the delay of rainfall." Winter rains are normally expected by the end of October, with the main rainfall usually falling in November. But the port city of Jeddah, which should get two centimetres of rain in November, had yet to see any, residents said.

Iran says drugs gang held slaves

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said its Revolutionary Guards have wiped out two notorious drugs gangs in a major crackdown on traffickers who it said had held hundreds of people as slaves in the remote mountains of southeast Iran. The official news agency IRNA late on Sunday quoted Brigadier-General Qasem Soleymani as saying one of the gang leaders, Jalal Kamrani, had "terrorised the local people, and was holding as slaves 200 men and 300 women." It said Mr. Kamrani's 80-member gang had links with drug smuggling rings in nearby Afghanistan and Pakistan. Another gang led by Eideok Bameri was also annihilated in the operation which restored security in the region, in mountains close to Kerman some 1,000 kilometres southeast of Tehran, the agency said. "So relieved were the people that they held rejoicings for two days on hearing of the annihilation of Kamrani's gang," it quoted Gen. Soleymani as saying. IRNA said weapons seized by the guards during the operation included 140 Kalashnikov assault rifles, 10 machineguns, five rocket-propelled grenades, rocket launchers and other arms.

Velayati in Oman after Yemen

MUSCAT (AP) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on Monday expressed support for a recent call by Sultan Qaboos for greater cooperation among Gulf states in the interest of regional stability. Talking to reporters at the airport upon arrival in Oman, Mr. Velayati said this was a call that "we welcome and one to which we always give our attention." Mr. Velayati was on the second leg of a tour that began in Yemen on Sunday, when he declared that Iran sought cooperation with its neighbours. He welcomed Iraq's recognition of Kuwait as "a positive step" and said he hoped all problems among Gulf States would be solved through dialogue. He was scheduled to travel to Qatar after Oman. Mr. Velayati was accompanied by a large delegation of Iranian businessmen seeking to promote trade ties and investments among regional states.

Experts study Chepren pyramid for renovation

CAIRO (AFP) — Nine Egyptian and Italian archaeological experts have climbed the 4,500-year-old Chepren Pyramid to inspect damage from a 1992 earthquake and natural decay, an Italian diplomat said Friday.

Seven Italians and two Egyptians scaled the 136-meter high pyramid Friday to survey its four sides and tip, said Giovanni Valenza, technical advisor at the Italian embassy here.

"The idea is to see first hand the situation... for restoration to avoid the collapse of the most unstable stones," Mr. Valenza said, adding that the climb should last about a week.

The sarcophagus of Chepren, who ruled ancient Egypt during the fourth dynasty (2626-2575 B.C.), was discovered in 1818 by Giovanni Battista Belzoni, an Italian amateur explorer.

With a base of 210 metres, the Chepren pyramid is the second largest of the three Giza pyramids, in the suburbs of Cairo. The largest is the great Pyramid of Cheops — Chepren's father — which stands at 137 metres and has a base of 230 metres.

Chepren is the only Giza pyramid to have retained parts of its original limestone casing at its top.

Unlike other ancient Egyptian pyramids, Chepren was built with stones of various sizes and types which has led to deterioration, Mr. Valenza said.

"Some stones are protruding without any support because the lower stones have

been washed away or blown away," he said.

In addition, the 5.4 Richter scale earthquake that rocked Cairo in 1992 damaged the pyramid's tip.

"Some slabs (of limestone) on top rotated when the earthquake struck," Mr. Valenza said, adding that the damage was so obvious it could be seen with binoculars from the foot of the pyramid.

The stones need "a little support underneath them," he said, adding the support should be limestone "like the ancient Egyptians used," and not cement.

The archaeologists will also examine the possibility of constructing a staircase similar to those used by firemen for renovations.

The staircase will include a conveyor belt to transport materials needed for renovation work, Mr. Valenza said.

They will also draw up a "scientific document" of the pyramid's surfaces, which can be used by Egyptian antiquities officials for future restoration projects, Mr. Valenza said.

The full study should take about two months, after which the Egyptian government will get renovation work underway, he said.

The Italian team's work comes as part of a larger project to help in the restoration of two other ancient Egyptian monuments damaged in the earthquake: the Al Ghuri mosque in Cairo's Islamic district, and the Coptic Mo'alaka Church, Mr. Valenza said.

Canada caught up in Somalia scandal

Jeffrey Ulbrich
The Associated Press

TORONTO — Late one sultry evening just outside a bone-dry town in Somalia's western desert, soldiers from Canada's elite Airborne Regiment methodically beat, kicked and tortured a 16-year-old civilian captive until he died.

Twenty months and eight courts-martial later, only one soldier, a private, has received significant punishment. Now, a military doctor who was in Belet Huen, Somalia, on the night of March 16, 1993, is alleging a cover-up by senior Canadian military officers.

The charges, the trials, the whole sordid story of what happened during the Airborne Regiment's stint with the U.N. intervention force in Somalia has tarnished the image of the world's premier peacekeeping nation. It also has dampened the morale of many professionals who feel that 40 years of success in peacekeeping, a concept developed by Canada, is being obscured by one incident.

Under mounting pressure, Defence Minister David Collette announced on Thursday that a public inquiry will be held into the conduct of the Canadian forces in Somalia.

"The stories are concentrating on everything from cover-up at the very top right down to individuals on the ground conducting activities that should have been stopped

by the chain of command," said retired Major-General Lewis Mackenzie, who once commanded U.N. forces in Sarajevo.

Alex Morrison, executive director of the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, said the killing in Belet Huen "will have a great impact on future preparations for peacekeeping."

"Well-informed Canadian recognise that incident for what it is — regrettable, obscene and sorry — but they place it in the overall context of the Canadian armed forces," Mr. Morrison said.

The Canadian Airborne Regiment went into Belet Huen in December 1992 as part of the American-led U.N. intervention force. Three Somalis shot and killed in separate incidents during the tour. A fourth, Shidane Arone, was captured and beaten to death.

The story, as it emerged in courts-martial and reconstruction by journalists.

The Canadians were having trouble with looters at their compound. The Airborne's commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Carol Mathieu, gave permission to shoot infiltrators in the legs if they refused to stop. Major Anthony Seward authorised the men to "abuse" prisoners caught sneaking into the camp in order to discourage them.

Shidane was captured about 9 p.m. on March 16, 1993, and became a victim of that permission.

He was taken to a bunker called "the pit," where he was tied and blindfolded. Over the next three hours, Master Corporal Clayton Matchee beat him with his fists, a truncheon, and eventually a metal bar. He put a pistol to Shidane's head and used a small cigar to burn his feet.

Pvt. Elvin Kyle Brown participated briefly, striking Shidane in the jaw once and kicking him several times. Pvt. Brown then took photographs of the bloody Shidane and Col. Matchee.

More than a dozen enlisted men stopped at the pit to look. Dozens more, including officers, heard Shidane's screams. Nobody stopped it.

Col. Matchee was arrested March 18. Later that day, he was found hanging in his cell. He was cut down alive, but suffered such brain damage he was found unfit to stand trial.

Pvt. Brown was court-martialed and found guilty of manslaughter and torture. He was dismissed from the army "with disgrace" and sentenced to five years in prison.

Col. Mathieu was acquitted of negligent performance of duty. Maj. Seward was convicted of negligent performance of duty and given a severe reprimand. Sergeant Marc Boland pleaded guilty to negligent performance of duty, was jailed 90 days and demoted to private. All others were acquitted. Capt.

Michael Sox, who passed along the "abuse" order, is awaiting trial.

Maj. Barry Armstrong, a military surgeon, claimed last week that senior officers issued orders to destroy evidence about violence against civilians, including Shidane's death. He did not name the officers but said military police were aware of the orders. He said he refused to obey them and has evidence locked in a safe.

Maj. Armstrong also claimed that a Somali infiltrator killed on March 4, 1993, was shot in the back of the head, "execution style." Nobody was charged in that death.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien's Liberals, then in opposition, accused the Conservatives of a cover-up, saying they were trying to protect Defence Minister Kim Campbell, who then was seeking leadership of the Conservative Party.

Shidane's death was not officially announced for two weeks and then only after it was reported by the news media.

Speculation that the Airborne was a rogue unit gone wild has largely been dismissed.

Still, said Mr. Morrison, a former army colonel, "it's a very highly disciplined unit with a high sense of esprit de corps. Leaders are every vigilant that this sense of unit pride doesn't boil over. But in this case it did."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Alice Au Pays Des Merveilles
17:30 Un Pour Tous
18:00 Embarquement Pour
18:30 Le Vent Des Moissons
19:00 News in French
19:45 Varieties
20:30 F.B.I. The Untold Stories
20:30 Quantum Leap
21:10 Cracking The Code
22:00 News in English
22:30 The House of Eliott
23:10 Fly By Night

PRAYER TIMES

04:44 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha
06:04 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha
11:21 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha
16:14 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha
16:38 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha
17:59 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Switzerland, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.
627845
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624590,
Church of the Annunciation Tel.
637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Roman Catholic Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Annunciation Tel.
623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel.
628543.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328.

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-Day Saints Tel. 649032

Church of Nazareth Tel. 617591.

The Evangelical Local Church in

Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department

of Meteorology.

A cold air mass will cross the

Kingdom today, thus temperatures

will drop steadily with skies becoming

cloudy. Rain is expected to fall

with winds southeasterly active. In

Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy

with a chance of showers. Winds

will be southerly active and seas

choppy.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 16 / 24

Deserts 7 / 18

Jordan Valley 14 / 22

Yesterday's high temperatures:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Yusuf Samour 615648

Dr. Issam Asmar 890504

Dr. Rida Abu Zinah 894295

Fires pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asma pharmacy 637055

Nafrouk pharmacy 623672

Al Salem pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 649495

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairouth pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 647632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qanu (—)

Alquds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Mahab Hijawi 981217

Khalifeh pharmacy 965417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 611111

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue 630341

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 75121

Highway Police 643402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Safety Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 628900

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage

Complaints 897447

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information

(directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 636381



His Majesty King Hussein Monday visits the headquarters of Royal Jordanian (RJ) and meets with RJ chairman of the Board Basel Jardaneh (right) and the carrier's President and Chief Executive Officer, Nader Dahabi left. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

King visits RJ headquarters; reviews new air transport era

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday visited the headquarters of Royal Jordanian (RJ), reviewing the new air transport era.

The King, accompanied by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, visited the RJ headquarters in Amman. He was met by RJ Chairman of the Board Basel Jardaneh and RJ President and Chief Executive Officer Nader Dahabi.

The King reviewed the RJ fleet and the new air transport era. He also reviewed the RJ fleet and the new air transport era.



Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday chats with children at a school she opened for kindergarten and first grade youngsters with cerebral palsy (Petra photo).

Queen participates in working session of early childhood education meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday participated in a working session of the Conference on Early Childhood Education, entitled "Toward an Educational Philosophy for Preschool Children in Jordan," according to a Royal Court spokesman.

The conference was held under the patronage of the Queen and was organized by the National Association for the Education of the Child.

Queen Noor is the honorary president of the association, which was established in 1986 under the umbrella of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) with the aim of improving childhood programmes and services.

Fateh flexes muscles in Gaza

(Continued from page 1)

Fateh zealots will chop off the heads of conspirators and accused Al Zahar of accepting money from Iran, a charge Mr. Arafat echoed at the rally.

Israeli Arab mediators attempted to find a formula to prevent future violence that included compensation to the families of the dead and wounded.

The PNA said the agreement was incomplete. Hamas leaders did not sign an agreement because they want Mr. Arafat to publicly accept responsibility for the bloodshed until an investigation determines blame.

"He is still refusing to be held responsible for the Friday incident. So no real agreement between us and the PLO has been made," Mr. Zahar told the AP.

He said it was a provocation to allow armed men to fire at random at the rally when gunfire was at the root of the problem. "What we witnessed today is an escalation against us," he said.

Government to start planning diversional dam to collect Yarmouk River water — minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government will soon begin plans for the construction of a small diversional dam to collect water from the Yarmouk River flowing towards Jordan and Israel as stipulated in the Jordanian-Israel peace treaty, according to Water and Irrigation Minister Saleh Irshaidat Monday.

The minister said in a statement to the press that the project aims at enabling Jordan to acquire its lawful share of the Yarmouk River water as agreed to with Israel, expressing hope that the project would be completed by the Middle of 1995 to make available 25 million cubic metres of additional water annually.

Under Annex II of the peace treaty signed last month, Jordan will get 12 million cubic metres (MCM) from the Yarmouk River during the summer from May 15 until Oct. 15 and 13 MCM during the winter from Oct. 16 until May 14.

Dr. Irshaidat said that the Ministry of Water and Irrigation was starting to work on design plans, and tender documents and is also starting efforts to ensure funds to finance the project through the Ministry of Planning.

Upon execution of the project, Dr. Irshaidat said the ministry would then work to improve and mend the King Abdullah Canal and install a pipeline to draw water from Lake Tiberias.

He explained that under the treaty provisions, Jordan is to get 20 MCM more water from the lake during the summer.

Following that, he added, Jordan would begin on studies for the other dams included in the peace treaty. These will be constructed on the Jordan River at the point of confluence between the Yarmouk and Jordan rivers.

Meanwhile, Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) Secretary General Qusay Qteishat said in a statement Monday that the NAT was proceeding with plans for the replacement of the old water networks in different areas of Jordan at an estimated cost of JD 200 million.

Mr. Qteishat said that so far WAJ has replaced the old networks of Irbid and Zarqa and is working on those in Ramtha. He said the water network in Mafraq would be the near target.

Experts take up urgency of water conservation

AMMAN (Petra) — In a related topic, Dr. Irshaidat also Monday called for increased international aid to Jordan to help it overcome its water problems under the new era of peace.

Jordan's water resources are meagre and limited, and a great deal of the available water is lost because of several reasons, primarily misuse, thus seriously impacting on the Kingdom's sustainable development programmes, said the minister in an address at the opening session of a regional conference on water conservation in farming.

Pointing out that the average use of water for irrigation in third world countries stands at around 70 per cent, Dr. Irshaidat said that in Jordan 75 per cent of available water resources is being utilised for this purpose as the country depends heavily on agriculture.

As an example he cited water consumption in Jordan in 1993 as totalling 983 MCM. He said this amount was consumed for various purposes, and 736 MCM of the total went into farming.

Jordan is in need of help not only to ensure fresh water resources, but also to implement methods to improve water use in irrigation and to adopt agricultural patterns which economise on water use and result in very high economic yields, said the minister.

French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Bajot addressed the opening session underlining the importance of the seminar and the topics on its agenda.

That France and the European Union (EU) are participating in the conference reflects the importance they attach to discussions on water issues and on the exchange of expertise in farming, said the ambassador.

Secretary General of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Hashem Shboul underlined that Jordan was expected to face growing demands on water in the future in light of the country's expansion in development projects.

According to Mohammad Shatanawi, head of the University of Jordan's Centre on Water Studies and Research, the need to replace the country's outdated and damaged water networks was urgent and the completion of this task would save water for the growing demands of the increasing populations.

Organised by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation in cooperation with the University of Jordan and the European Union (EU), the meeting discusses water and irrigation policies in the Arab World, water plans and uses in Jordan, management of water resources, drip irrigation techniques, waste water recycling and other relevant issues.

Six Arab and seven foreign countries including some in the European Union as well as several international organisations are taking part in the meeting.

Jordan, Egypt agree to lay joint underwater power cable

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Egypt Monday signed an agreement in Cairo to lay an underwater cable linking the two countries as part of an overall project of linking the two countries' power grids.

Egyptian Minister of Electricity and Energy Maher Abaza said the 13-kilometre cable will be set by a Norwegian company at a depth of 850 metres under the Aqaba Gulf.

The 400-kilovolt cable will be laid in cooperation with Jordanian and Egyptian firms which sub-contract with the Norwegian company, according to Mr. Abaza.

He said the power linkage project is aimed at helping the two countries meet any electric energy shortages.

The deal was signed by Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Director General Mohammad Arafah and Mohammad Abdullah, head of the Egyptian Electricity Corporation.

The project is funded by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD).

AFESD President Abdul Latif Al Hamad said the 240 million Egyptian pounds (JD 48 million) project is significant since it links Asia with Africa and paves the way for linkages with other countries in the two continents.

The Norwegian company's contract is worth \$70 million and a \$1.5 million contract has been awarded to a Turkish firm to carry out civil works and towers connected to the project, according to Mr. Arafah.

He told the Jordan Times in an interview last August, that Jordan was working on expanding its linkage with the network of Syria which in turn is being connected with that of Turkey as part of a five-country agreement signed early this year grouping Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Turkey.

Rawabdeh discusses educational cooperation with Qatari crown prince

DOHA (Petra) — Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh Monday met in here with Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani and reviewed Jordanian-Qatari relations with particular focus on education.

Mr. Rawabdeh, who arrived in Doha Sunday on an official visit for talks on promoting educational cooperation, reviewed with Sheikh Hamad, who is also minister of defence, an existing programme of cooperation in educational fields.

The meeting was in the presence of Qatari Minister of Education Abdul Aziz Turki and Jordan's ambassador to Qatar, Trad Al Fayez.

Earlier Mr. Rawabdeh held talks with Mr. Turki and his senior assistants and said in a statement that brotherly ties are being strengthened through education, the secondment of Jordanian teachers and other exchanges which, he said, lie at the foundation of uniting the Arab World.

Mr. Turki lauded Jordanian-Qatari relations, stressing Doha's determination to enhance cooperation in educational and cultural fields.

He said Jordan and Qatar had signed a cultural agreement in 1972 which was updated in 1979, in 1982 and 1987; and these were implemented through executive programmes which continue to run until 1996.

Furthermore, bilateral agreements between Qatar's university and Yarmouk University and the University of Jordan aim at bolstering cultural ties, added Mr. Turki.

The talks covered the implementation of educational protocols that cover cooperation in educational, scientific and cultural fields.

Seconding Jordanian teachers to Qatar, cooperation in curricula and examinations and the training of teachers, the exchange of scholarships and visits by educational supervisors as well as books and publications were on the agenda.

Mr. Rawabdeh also Monday visited Qatar University, meeting with its president and other officials to learn about programmes and the work of its research centre.



Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Abdullah opens Jordan week in Casablanca

CASABLANCA (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein Monday opened Jordanian Week in Casablanca, an event which is organised by the Jordanian Exports Development and Trade Centres Corporation (JEDTCC) in cooperation with the Moroccan Ministry of Traditional Industries, Foreign Trade and Tourism.

The activities of the opening ceremony included performances by the Royal Jordanian (RJ) Folklore Troupe and the Jordanian Armed Forces Band. The week, held on the sidelines of the Jordanian Industries Fair, includes exhibitions by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and RJ which aim to promote tourism in Jordan.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs also has a special pavilion at the fair displaying all the stages of the third Jordanian reconstruction of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah, Princess Rania and Princess Aisha and her husband Zeid Jum'a arrived in Casablanca Sunday and were received by Prince Rashid and Princess Hama.

PSD chief to head for Haiti

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the Public Security Department (PSD) Lieutenant General Abdul Rahman Al Udwan Tuesday will leave for Haiti on a five-day visit to inspect the Jordanian peacekeeping force deployed there.

Gen. Udwan will be accompanied on the visit by Director of the PSD Operations Brigadier Salman Al Ma'aitah and Director of Public Relations and Moral Guidance Colonel Mahmoud Obeidat.

Jordan, Vietnam conclude aviation accord

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian civil aviation delegation Monday returned home from Hanoi, Vietnam, after finalising an agreement, which was initiated by the two sides last December, defines the number of flights the Jordanian and the Vietnamese airlines would be operating between the two countries. The national carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ) is expected to operate regular flights to and from Vietnam soon.

Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Ahmad Jweiber, who headed the delegation, commended, in an address delivered at the signing ceremony, Vietnam's openness to the world and development witnessed in the Southeast Asian country.

IAF urges France to lift ban on scarf

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) bloc in Parliament on Monday called on the French government to lift what it said were restrictions imposed on the religious freedoms of Muslims living in France.

The call came amid the reaffirmations by a French minister of a ban on Muslim girls wearing headscarves in French government schools.

The IAF made its appeal to the French government during a meeting that a delegation representing the 16-strong IAF bloc in the Lower House of Parliament had with the French ambassador to Jordan, Bernard Bajot, an IAF statement said.

The statement quoted the delegation as telling Ambassador Bajot that "we are surprised that France, which is proud of its revolution and culture, is restricting basic human freedoms, including the freedom to exercise religious rights."

"Restraining our brothers and sisters in France from exercising their religious freedoms, including the freedom to choose their dress... will not help contribute to developing the traditionally good relations between your republic and Arab and Muslim countries," the statement quoted the delegation as telling the ambassador.

"Education is a right of every individual regardless of dress," it quoted deputies Hamzeh Mansour and Mohammad Owaidah as saying during the meeting. It was a reference to the expulsion of Muslim girls from French government schools for defying the ban on headscarves.

A spokesman for the French embassy confirmed the meeting and said the deputies delivered to Mr. Bajot a letter addressed to President Francois Mitterrand.

The spokesman quoted Mr. Bajot as telling the IAF deputies that France respected the freedom to exercise religious practices and hoped that the rest of the world would extend such respect in the same way.

The IAF was the latest Islamist group to protest the French ban on the Islamic headscarf, which also came amid a French government crackdown on military groups, including Algerian Muslim fundamentalist groups.

Iranian women have staged several demonstrations in front of the French embassy in Tehran denouncing the ban on headscarves, and Iranian religious leaders have issued implicit warning that French-Iranian relations stood to deteriorate further if the Paris government insisted on its stand.

On Sunday, French Education Minister Francois Bayrou defended the ban on Muslim girls wearing headscarves in state-run schools, saying the government had to stop the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in France.

About 30 girls have been expelled from schools for refusing to abide by the ban on headscarves. The ban is seen by Muslim groups as a denial of their right to wear their traditional Islamic dress.

Mr. Bayrou banned the headscarves in September, describing them as "ostentatious religious symbols."

"When you are in government... you try to look into the future to see what the needs are, those whose growth will threaten French society and a certain vision of men and women in the next century," Mr. Bayrou was quoted as saying in a television interview on Sunday.

"When you see them, you have a choice only between two things: between acting and doing nothing," Reuters quoted the minister as saying.

According to Mr. Bayrou, the number of girls wearing headscarves in school had plunged to about 600 from 2,000 in September.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- FILM**
 - ★ Film entitled "Nachtsky" at Goethe-Institut at 7:00 p.m.
 - ★ Film in French entitled "Spectre of Freedom" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:30 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
 - ★ Paintings exhibition by Syrian artist Ghayas Al Akhras at Baladna Art Gallery.
 - ★ Ceramics exhibition by Maher Samarra at Alfa Art Gallery.
 - ★ Ceramics exhibition by Najwa Annab at the Orfali Art Gallery.
 - ★ Ceramics exhibition by Sa'id Al 'Ani at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art. Also showing a paintings exhibition by Husni Abu Karim.
- LECTURE**
 - ★ Lecture in Arabic on the crucial role of
- Abu Karim.**
 - ★ Exhibition on human international law entitled "Drawings from Arab Calligraphy" at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing an exhibition of wooden products by Atallah Zabaneh.
 - ★ Exhibition of paintings by Daniel Argimon at the Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).
 - ★ Exhibit entitled "Signs and Symbols: Communication and Interpretation from the Brandywine Workshop" at the American Center.
 - ★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.

Ruling party election throws Nepal into turmoil

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepal's ruling Congress Party staged a late comeback Monday in general elections, cutting heavily into the Communists' lead and throwing the Himalayan kingdom into political confusion.

"It is not a stable situation and it is unclear and uncertain," said Lok Raj Baral, political science professor at Tribhuvan University in the capital Kathmandu.

Congress, which had lagged behind the Communist Party by as many as two dozen seats in early returns from last Tuesday's parliamentary polls, dramatically narrowed their rivals' lead to six, with six races yet to be decided.

With results reported in 199 constituencies, the Communist Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) had 86 seats to Congress's 90.

The Communists still looked likely to win a razor-thin plurality but it was unclear if they would find a coalition partner to give them a working majority of at least 103.

The Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) emerged as a political wild card, winning 20 seats — 16 more than it held in the outgoing parliament.

RPP's leaders governed the kingdom for three decades under a partyless system which crumbled in 1990 following pro-democracy demonstrations led by Congress and the Communists.

In the last elections in 1991, won by Congress, the RPP was on the political fringe, but it now enjoys a stronger bargaining position.

"We will cooperate with anybody with which our policies are compatible," RPP spokesman Kamal Thapa said. "I don't rule out the possibility of us supporting the Congress or the UML depending on the policies they adopt."

Congress had conceded defeat to the Communists several days ago, saying they would sit in opposition.

But Congress President Krishna Prasad Bhattarai said Monday his party could now catch up to the UML, giving the outgoing rulers the chance to form a coalition government.

"We will explore all possibilities," he said. "We will not leave any option."

UML accused Congress of rigging the final races to cut the Communists' lead, and said Congress had no moral

right to form a government because the UML had the most seats.

"A tense political situation may emerge if the Nepali Congress by hook or by crook want to form the government," UML General Secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal said.

"In that case it will not be a stable government because a government which is formed by means of open rigging and blatant violation of all norms of election and democracy cannot sustain and cannot command the respect of the masses."

In the event of a hung parliament, Nepal's four-year-old constitution requires King Birendra to name a prime minister able to form a workable coalition government.

If no lawmaker can command a majority, then the king must choose the leader of the party with the most seats. If a coalition fails to win a vote of confidence within 30 days, fresh polls must be called within six months.

The UML has explored coalition possibilities with Congress dissidents who triggered the snap poll by abandoning Prime Minister Girija

Prasad Koirala in a confidence vote in July.

But it was unclear if the dissidents wanted to break away from Mr. Koirala or if under parliamentary rules they could do so.

The UML's Nepal said he met the head of the Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party, with four seats, and the splinter Communist group "assured critical and conditional support."

Mr. Baral said the shape of any coalition would depend on moves by Congress and the RPP in coming days.

"The elections which were held by the prime minister seeking a mandate for stability have come otherwise, leading to every possibility of political instability," Mr. Baral said.

The Nepalese prime minister Monday tendered his resignation to King Birendra at the royal palace following the humiliating defeat of his party, a source close to the premier said.

Mr. Koirala was elected to the lower house of parliament on Nov. 15 and said he would not lead the new government if his Nepali Congress (NC) party could not muster a majority to form a government.



Chinese President Jiang Zemin (left) lays a wreath at the mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh, the founder of Communist Vietnam, in Hanoi, Mr. Jiang, who is also Chinese Communist Party secretary general, is on a four-day official visit in Vietnam (AFP photo)

Jiang sidesteps Spratlys in Vietnam visit

HANOI (AFP) — Chinese President Jiang Zemin sidestepped troubling tensions with Vietnam over disputes in the South China Sea, and spent Monday on ceremonial visits that looked back to a time of warmer relations between the neighbours.

But while the Chinese seemed eager to avoid the issue of conflicting claims of sovereignty over the Spratly and Parcel Islands, the Vietnamese pushed it forward by reminding Beijing of Hanoi's position.

The local Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan juxtaposed front-page pictures of Mr. Jiang's arrival with a smaller photo of singers entertaining Vietnamese sailors on the Spratly Islands.

Press coverage of Vietnam's local elections Sunday also put unusual emphasis on voters going to the polls in the barely populated South China Sea islands.

Mr. Jiang, however, made it clear that the Chinese would prefer to play a waiting game on the Spratlys, moving ahead with other issues while pledging to resolve the problem peacefully.

"There is no denying that there exist problems between China and Vietnam," Mr. Jiang told Vietnamese President Le Duc Anh at a banquet late Sunday.

But the Chinese president added: "We should try not to let these problems, which cannot be settled immediately, stand in the way of the development of relations between the countries."

Rival maritime claims, as well as long-running problems over their land border, have lent a permanent sour note to relations. Yet the world's two largest Communist states have expanded economic links since resuming diplomatic relations in 1991.

After talks with leaders here, Mr. Jiang, the first head of China's Communist Party to visit Vietnam, spent the day harking back to the era when the two sides described themselves as being "as close as teeth and lips."

He laid wreaths at a war memorial and at the mausoleum of independence hero Ho Chi Minh, once a close ally of China's. Mr. Jiang also held a meeting with retired Premier Pham Van Dong, who governed Vietnam for nearly 30 years.

Mr. Jiang later visited a tobacco factory built with Chinese aid in 1957 and the Temple of Literature, a university founded along Confucian lines nearly a thousand years ago.

Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, a member of the more than 130-strong delegation travelling with Mr. Jiang, held talks with his counterpart, Nguyen Manh Cam.

Richard Gere 'ready to divorce' Cindy Crawford

LONDON (AP) — Richard Gere was lying low in London, after a tabloid newspaper published photos purportedly showing a 22-year-old model making early-morning getaways from his apartment. The weekly News Of The World quoted an unidentified friend of Gere as saying, "He thinks Laura is very sweet and sees his future with her."

Three photos showed Bailey leaving what the newspaper said was Gere's posh apartment building in London's Chelsea area. In one picture, she is hopping over a garden wall to the yard of the building next door. Her facial expression is notably vexed. There was no sign of Gere at his apartment after the report appeared.

Bailey has been spotted on the street early in the morning in the past, but she has said that she was visiting a girlfriend who lives next door. Gere, a Buddhist, met Bailey at a party thrown last July by his religious mentor and friend, the Dalai Lama, the News Of The World said. It said that Crawford, 28, and Gere, 45, had placed their \$5.5 million Hollywood home up for sale, and that they want an amicable divorce.

"It's in the hands of lawyers and he keeps bugging them to sort it out," the paper quoted the unidentified "friend" as saying. Gere is in Britain filming First Knight, in which he plays Sir Lancelot opposite Sean Connery's King Arthur.

Some Chinese maps can get you lost

BEIJING (AP) — If near-sighted shoppers start going to Tiananmen Gate looking for new eyeglasses or people start trying to order food from the army guards at Mao Tse-tung's Mausoleum, blame it on the maps. Maps of Beijing and Shanghai are full of errors like the ones that put the Daming Spectacles shop on top of the old city gate that faces Tiananmen Square and mislabels the final resting place of revolutionary leader Mao as 'Yueshengzhai', a restaurant that specialises in beef and is located down the road from the mausoleum, according to a report in Monday's Guangming Daily. The Shanghai government office in charge of maps has received scores of letters pointing out more than 150 errors in the official Shanghai city street map. Errors in Beijing maps include moving 2,000-square kilometre (1,240-square mile) Changping County, a community of 300,000 people, from the outskirts of Beijing to the next province, and mislabeling the Beijing Library as the Beijing Drawing Gallery and the China History Museum as the Wangfujing branch store. The errors are not limited to city maps of China. Maps of China incorrectly label Hainan Island in the South China Sea and world maps have international borders in the wrong places, the report said. The government has issued several laws governing map production, but they are not often enforced. With a 50 per cent profit margin on map-making and the increasing need for maps as Chinese become more mobile, it is easy to see why the map market has gotten out of control, the paper said. The Beijing City Planning Research Institute every year uncovers more than 10 cases of illegally printed maps. In some cases, they are patched together, cut-and-paste-style, from existing maps on the market. In other cases, printing firms use their connections to get copies of approved maps to reprint.

U.K. on alert for invasion of plastic ducks

LONDON (R) — An armada of 29,000 plastic toy ducks are bobbing their way towards the coast of Britain, the Times newspaper said Monday. "Britain should be put on duck alert," Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer, an oceanographer from Seattle, Washington who has been using computer simulation to track the toys, told the newspaper. The animals, which also include some blue turtles, red beavers and green frogs, were washed overboard in heavy seas from a container ship in the North Pacific in January 1992. They had been frozen in the Arctic Sea but are expected to be carried south by the Gulf stream, completing their 12,000 mile voyage on the British and Irish coasts.

'State tried to kill Mandela in 1969'

NEW YORK (R) — Nelson Mandela was nearly killed in 1969 while a political prisoner in a state-sponsored assassination plot disguised as an escape attempt, the South African president says in his forthcoming autobiography.

Mr. Mandela, in an excerpt of his autobiography appearing in the issue of Time magazine

hitting newsstands this week, said he thwarted the plot by refusing to cooperate in the escape bid.

"It was not the last time, they would try to eliminate me," he said in the excerpt.

In an excerpt published in Britain, Mr. Mandela said his estranged wife, Winnie, showed poor judgment over

her use of private bodyguards but was not guilty of any serious offences.

Mr. Mandela described the assassination plot in a section recounting his time in South Africa's Robben Island Prison. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1960 for high treason.

France proposes EU fund to solve disputes

PARIS (R) — France, the next president of the European Union, Monday proposed creating an EU fund to help potential future members in Central and Eastern Europe settle border and minority disputes.

Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, who initiated an EU drive for a European stability pact, told a seminar at the French parliament that good neighbourly relations were a condition for EU membership since the union did not want to import conflicts.

Suu Kyi backs democracy movements

MANILA (R) — Detained Burmese dissident leader Aung San Suu Kyi, in a speech delivered in absentia, attacked tyrannical regimes Monday and urged the United Nations to support democracy movements around the world.

The speech by the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize laureate — under house arrest in Burma for six years — was read by former Philippines President Corazon Aquino, a

democracy campaigner who led a 1986 popular revolt that toppled the late Ferdinand Marcos from 20 years in power.

"In the speech to an Asia-Pacific regional conference of the U.N. agency World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD), Ms. Suu Kyi challenged the view among authoritarian governments that economic growth was paramount to democratic

reforms.

She said this "can be a recipe for disaster."

She slammed arguments that democracy was a Western concept alien to indigenous peoples of Asia and Africa and that democratic rights should give way to economic development.

A rapid democratic transition strengthening of civil society is necessary to develop societies genuinely she said.

France opposes early enlargement of NATO

PARIS (Agencies) — France said Monday that a hasty enlargement of the NATO alliance or the Western European Union (WEU) to include Central European states could lead to more, rather than less, instability in Europe.

French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur appeared to be responding to U.S. pressure for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to take new steps towards enlargement at its ministerial council next month.

Mr. Balladur told a seminar on European stability in Paris: "The aim is not to speed up the enlargement of security bodies such as NATO or the WEU. Everyone is well aware that the sudden inclusion of new countries in these alliances could cause more instability than stability on our continent."

He made no direct reference to the U.S. drive for the Atlantic alliance to begin discussing with Central and Eastern European countries "the how and why but not yet the who and when" of NATO membership.

The U.S. administration is mapping out a strategy for bolstering European security through gradual expansion of

NATO and a new upgraded role for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The proposals to be presented at the NATO ministerial meeting in Brussels and the CSCE summit next month were to allay Russian concerns of a threat from any eastward expansion of NATO.

Russia has long argued that the CSCE — of which it is a member — should take on the role of ensuring post-cold war security in Europe, a position that has been met with some support from France.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher heads to Brussels next week to propose criteria for NATO membership at the ministerial meeting scheduled for Dec. 1 and 2.

President Bill Clinton was to put forward his vision of a stronger CSCE at its Budapest summit on Dec. 5 and 6, a move expected to lead to the birth of a new Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Eastern and Central Europe are in need of a "forum for preventive diplomacy, economic aid and environmental cleanup," a State Department official said ahead of the two key

events.

The war in the former Yugoslavia has shown that "the CSCE is the organisation of the future because it has in its broader mandate the ability to deal with territorial disputes and ethnic tensions, and NATO does not," he said.

Mr. Clinton, who discussed NATO's future with Russian President Boris Yeltsin in September, won support from Russia for widening the military alliance "as long as it is done gradually, carefully and in a transparent manner," a U.S. diplomat said.

Countries eligible for entry into the security alliance would have to show commitment to democracy and to free markets while proving their ability to adapt their defence capabilities to NATO standards, a condition viewed by many as difficult to meet.

NATO membership would have to be approved unanimously by the 16 member-states of the Atlantic alliance and by the U.S. Congress in line with treaty provisions.

The move towards new European security arrangements comes after a controversial U.S. decision to stop enforcing the Bosnian arms embargo sparked tension in Washington's rela-

tions with NATO allies.

The U.S. military presence in Europe has also reached its lowest level in 40 years, prompting concerns among European leaders that new mechanisms must be put in place to compensate for the trimmed-down U.S. support.

Mr. Clinton was to propose that the CSCE play a more active diplomatic role in mediating conflicts including the ongoing war between ethnic Armenians and Azeris for control of Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian enclave located inside Azerbaijan.

He was also to urge member-states to take one role in overseeing future peacekeeping operations and develop a framework for conventional arms control and non-proliferation issues.

The CSCE was also to be asked to help rehabilitate the former Yugoslav states which have taken hard economic hits from the 31-month war in Bosnia and the international embargo.

The CSCE, born out of the 1975 Helsinki Accords, has long focused on human rights issues, but a loose structure and limited powers have prevented the organisation from taking on greater European security challenges.

Japan acknowledges Pearl Harbour blunder

TOKYO (R) — Japan has acknowledged for the first time that it blundered in not delivering a diplomatic cable to the United States signalling the start of war until its forces had already attacked Pearl Harbour.

Foreign Ministry documents from the period released at the weekend blamed a "lack of urgency" by Japan's Washington embassy staff in delivering the cable, which Tokyo was withdrawing from talks aimed at avoiding war.

Japan attacked the U.S. military base at Pearl Harbour on Dec. 7, 1941, without a declaration of war.

A ministry statement issued with the newly declassified documents apologised

for not passing on the cable. "There is no room for excuse," it said.

It was the ministry's first official recognition that Japanese diplomats had blundered over the start of war. Many historians say that if the document announcing the end of the negotiations had been delivered earlier, the United States could have anticipated attack and taken precautions at its bases.

The Pearl Harbour raid by Japanese carrier-based planes in the early morning hours of Dec. 7 dealt a devastating blow to the U.S. Fleet.

According to the documents, the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo sent a total of 13 secret memoranda on the negotiations to the Washing-

ton embassy. All of them were decoded there by a telegrapher by the evening of Dec. 6.

The telegrapher then left the embassy to attend a farewell party for a returning diplomat. First Secretary Shozo Okumura, who was supposed to type a clean copy, went home, leaving the work until the following day.

A top-secret 14th memorandum, which announced Tokyo's withdrawal from the talks, was dispatched on the morning of Dec. 7 and decoded by noon Washington time.

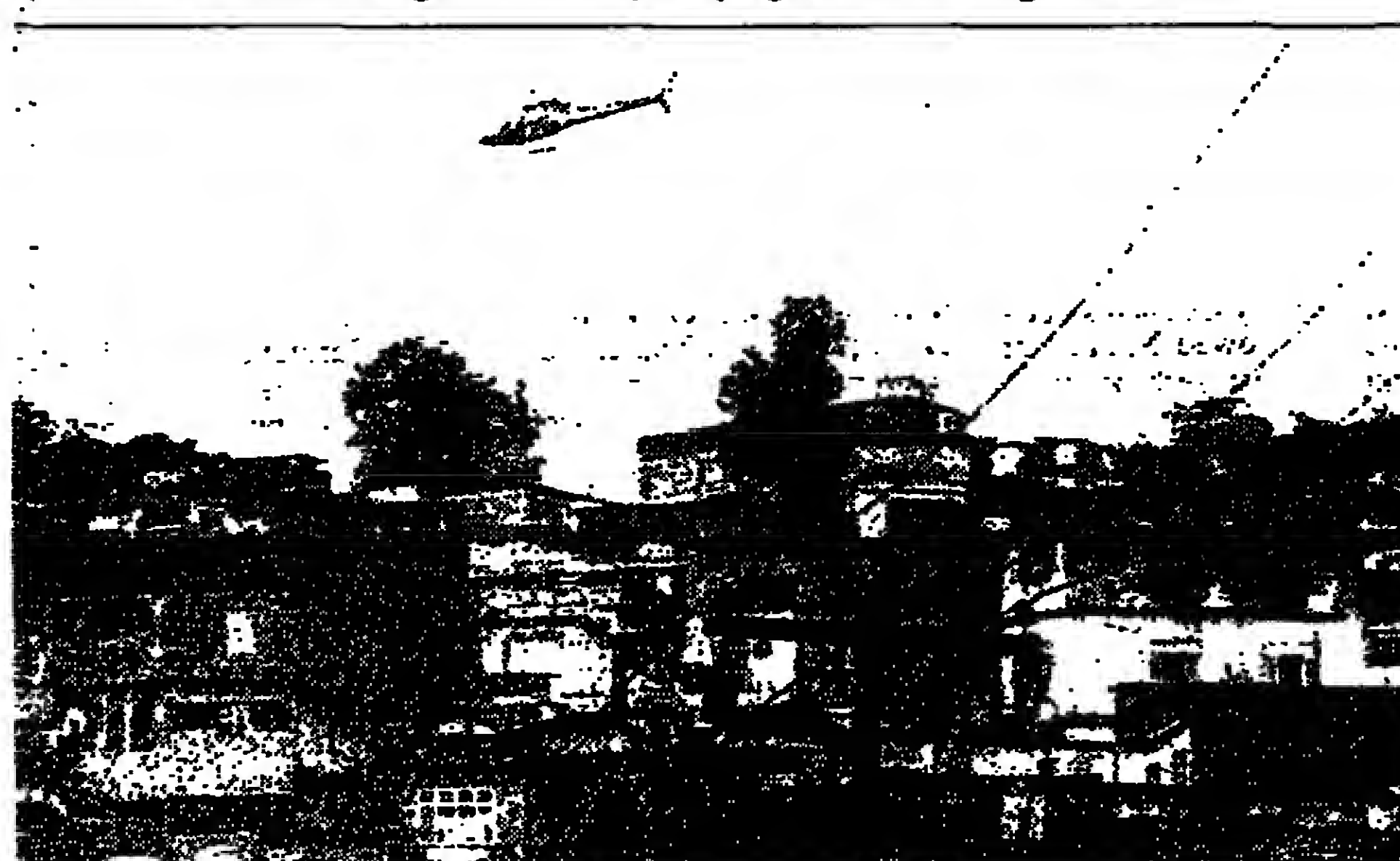
It was supposed to be delivered by 1 p.m. on Dec. 7, just 25 minutes before the Japanese warplanes started

the attack on Pearl Harbour, but its fair copy was not ready before 1.25 p.m. by then the Japanese air raids had set off the Pacific War.

The 14th memorandum was actually handed over to U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull only at 2.20 p.m., according to the documents.

The Foreign Ministry concluded that the memorandum was not processed in time because embassy personnel in Washington failed to realise the decision to break off talks meant war.

A ministry investigation primarily blamed Mr. Okumura for the delay, saying there was "professional negligence at the governmental establishment abroad (the embassy)."



A Brazilian army helicopter flies low over the hillside shacks of the shantytown of Dende in Rio De Janeiro. Some 1,500 federal army troops are taking part in a government operation launched in Rio's slums aimed at cracking down on the illegal trade in fire arms and drugs (AFP photo)

Soldiers camp for 2nd night in Rio slum

RIO DE JANEIRO (Agencies) — Brazilian army soldiers were preparing to spend a second night occupying one of Rio De Janeiro's crime-ridden shantytowns in the military's three-week-old crackdown on drug-related crime.

In scenes more reminiscent of a war zone than the city of Samba and Sun, local television showed soldiers in the slums lying flat on the ground, holding guns, faces painted in battlefield green.

"But it was unclear if the sandbag shelters many crouched behind were there to protect the soldiers from snipers or from the heavy rains falling in recent days."

tanks, the soldiers moved into two shantytowns Saturday morning.

After seizing drugs, firearms and a stash of money discovered in an abandoned shack, the soldiers withdrew from one of the slums this afternoon.

The crime crackdown, announced by President Itamar Franco on Oct. 31, was noticeably low-key until Friday afternoon when soldiers set up temporary checkpoints at the entrance of five slums throughout the city.

The troops detained more than 150 people in the massive sweep across slums that officials said Sunday was hitting hard at the city's drug trade.

"Organised crime has abandoned the area," Col. Ivan Cardoso told reporters. But federal forces remained active in nearby Dende, and Col. Cardoso said troops might move into any of the 600 shantytowns surrounding Rio de Janeiro in the upcoming days.

In Mangueira, a total of 128 people were detained, including three young offenders authorities believe are linked to the drug mafia, but only 18 were turned over to the police anti-drug unit.

In Dende, military forces detained 39 people and navy gunmen vowed to remain in the district until every house believed to be a refuge for drugs and arms trafficking was searched.

"The main thing is not the number of arrests, drugs or arms seized but rather that drug dealers leave the shantytowns," said Colonel Luis Cesario.

The U.S. administration is mapping out a strategy for bolstering European security through gradual expansion of



A young resident of the shantytown of Mangueira, Rio de Janeiro, looks at a Brazilian army soldier as he patrols the outskirts of the slum district (AFP photo)

By Rami G. Khouri

Jordan Times

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Driving the point in

THINGS ARE maybe shaping up for road safety in Jordan if all the local rhetoric about making driving in the country safer for both drivers and pedestrians comes to fruition. Jordan has lately witnessed a sharp upsurge in road accidents that claimed unprecedented number of lives. The concerned authorities appear to be responding to the carnage on our streets but we wonder how effective or even serious the response is. For example, the Traffic Department is currently conducting monthly programmes that aim to rehabilitate taxi drivers who have developed a habit of flouting every safe driving code in the country. The organisers of this "reeducational" campaign hope to awaken irresponsible drivers to the need to operate their vehicles in accordance with applicable road safety guidelines. This suggests that the crux of the problem we face is strictly a matter of reeducating drivers as to what is acceptable and what is not when it comes to driving on national roads and highways. We beg to differ on this score.

All Jordanians with a valid driving licence know only too well what the rules of the game are. The problem with so many of them is not lack of knowledge about what constitutes reasonable driving habits but rather the actual disrespect for the laws. Who among the so many reckless drivers around does not know that a stop sign means real stopping instead of the current interpretation of such signs as mere decorations or better still as a licence to proceed forward at full speed? We also do not understand the apparent concern of our authorities to educate drivers when traffic policemen themselves have yet to take seriously all driving rules and not only speeding and illegal parking. Everything else seems to be ignored, including orderly driving within lanes (when they are visible), observing the right of way and other driving courtesies that are nowhere to be found in the Jordanian driving culture. It is going to take more than two days of lecturing to transform dangerous driving in this country into a safe one. Maybe the seminar on safe driving, that the police department will conduct next week in cooperation with the National Swedish Institute for Consultation, will open new avenues for making driving in Jordan less hazardous.

What the country actually needs is a new driving culture that is safe and courteous. This is no easy task, but a beginning must be made. Perseverance on the part of the concerned authorities in making driving in the country safe is a sine qua non for any real change. When the traffic police themselves are ill-motivated and do not care less about any traffic violation except speeding and illegal parking, the central problem lies with the police and not the public. Unless our guests for next week, the Swedish experts, fully comprehend the essence of the problem, their contributions may not be as useful as we all hope it will be. What we need is not abstract advice but down-to-earth remedies that are commensurate with our pressing needs.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMBIANIST in Al Ra'i daily Monday demanded that the Ministry of Industry and Trade set and apply specifications and measurements that can safeguard public health and protect Jordanian people's interests. Tareq Masarweh cited the example of the shipment of tomatoes that was Sunday returned to Jordan after failing to pass Israeli quality control and specifications tests saying that bad quality products, including tomatoes, are sold daily in the Jordanian markets which are not subject to control of any kind. Many of the locally-produced goods and imported commodities are of a quality far below the internationally-accepted levels of specifications, including foodstuff, which are consumed in Jordan, said the writer. He recalled that a shipment of contaminated rice and coffee was consumed here as were consignments of meat unfit for human consumption. Even cars that are sold in Jordan are lower quality than those sold in other Arab states, he said. There can be no real protection to people's health through regular Health Ministry regulations, said the writer who demanded the Ministry of Industry and Trade set specifications which can help control all kinds of items sold in the Kingdom.

AL DUSTOUR daily reflected on the Jordanian-Qatari relations in light of a visit to Doha by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and talks held in Jordan by the Qatari Information Minister Dr. Hamad Kuwari. The visit and the talks, said the paper, usher in a new era of fruitful cooperation between the two sister countries thanks to the directives of the leaderships in the two countries. While expressing our deep satisfaction and delight over these developments, we can only hope that Qatari-Jordanian relations would set ideal example for the other Arab countries, including the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, continued the paper. It said that Jordan hopes that the strong ties between Qatar and Jordan would open the door for similar relations between Qatar and Jordan and the rest of the Gulf states so that they can together lead the way towards reestablishing solidarity among Arab states.

The View from Fourth Circle

Fighting to avoid the sad margins of history

The recent clashes in Gaza between Palestinians for and against the PLO-Israel accord are not only about Hamas, Yasser Arafat, Islam and the ideology of the majority of Palestinians. They are about something far deeper, for they have ushered in the Palestinian hour of historical reckoning. The next half year or so is likely to indicate whether the Palestinians are a viable people who can exercise their right to a sovereign state, or whether they are only a demographic limb of the greater Arab World that got caught and was snapped off in the claws of European colonialism and Zionism.

The shock of Palestinians being killed by other Palestinians is real, but is rather overplayed in the media. Palestinians have been killing each other for many years, as have Arabs in many other parts of the Middle East. There are few if any Arab countries where the police and army have not routinely attacked their own people in the name of security and development. This is regrettable, but not unusual in the Arab World.

The real cause of the shock about the fighting in Gaza is what it suggests to us about the Palestinian future. It holds out the unimaginable spectre of perpetual marginalisation, of a people relegated to the peripheral status of a semi-free, semi-caged, quasi-nation ruled by the political laws of petty local gangsterism. It is an ugly but still possible prospect.

The most important underlying reason for the violence in Gaza is the sudden clarity of how weak is the PLO-Israel peace process, and how limited are the Palestinian gains from it to date, in the face of two other factors that now require attention: the successful Jordanian-Israeli peace accord, and the option of violent resistance against Israel, as Hamas and Islamic Jihad have shown. Most Palestinians compare their predicament with the successful Jordanian peace treaty and they find the situation quite humiliating; they are not necessarily angry at Jordan, but rather at Israel and at their own Palestinian leaders. Further Palestinian resentment is fuelled by another huge and compelling contrast: on the one hand, Israel treats Yasser Arafat as an errand boy, subjects him to demeaning demands, and tells him he will have no more gains to show for his diplomacy until he fulfills Israel's demands; and on the other hand, Palestinian Islamists strike fear into the hearts of Israelis by bombing them in their own homes.

The inability of the PLO to significantly improve the life quality of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation has emphasised the PLO-Israel peace accord's real weaknesses, while neutralising its potential strengths. Perhaps this could not have been avoided, given the imbalance between

Israel's strong negotiating position and the frail Palestinian position. Nevertheless, fourteen months after it was signed the PLO-Israel accord appears to most Palestinians to be an ignoble and humiliating document, little more than a cruel, empty promise. Arafat and Company appear unable to make it work any better than it has to date, and the trigger-happy performance of the Palestinian police has only made Arafat look more brutish and repugnant in the eyes of many of his own people.

This situation has been exploited by the Palestinian Islamists, though their position remains weakened by the fact that they cannot offer a credible alternative other than violent resistance. Nevertheless, for many Palestinians facing the choice between Arafat's slow motion surrender and the Islamists' heart-throbbing resistance, the Islamists look much more attractive.

Arafat has three obvious options, and one not so obvious. The three obvious ones are, a) cracking down further on the Islamists (which will only make them stronger and more popular), b) speeding up the implementation of the peace accord by getting the Israelis to withdraw, holding the Palestinian elections and securing the international funds pledged for improving the Palestinian economy (which would revive his political credibility but perhaps not fully), and, c) keeping the situation as it is (which would slowly see his position become totally untenable).

The slightly less obvious option is for Arafat to address his two key partners, both of whom are hurting him, namely the Palestinian Islamists and the Israeli government. He might consider calling a Palestinian national conference, identifying the weaknesses in the peace accord, and then joining forces with the Islamists and demanding from Israel that the accords be renegotiated. The aim of reopening negotiations would be to address those issues that remained open in the current accord, namely settlements, refugees, Jerusalem and final borders and security.

If Arafat can address the weak points of the peace accord and show Israel that he speaks on behalf of all Palestinians, he may be able to bring enough pressure on Israel to secure the concessions he needs. The Israeli government may have good cause to meet him halfway, for Arafat's downfall would also probably mark the downfall of Rabin and his Labour government and the return of a Likud-led government. It is in Israel's interest to see Arafat succeed. Clearly, if Arafat did nothing new in the coming months he could only survive this crisis by becoming an increasingly

autocratic, isolated and violent leader, and he would then surely be thrown out in a coup or a popular revolt.

The precipitous decline of the Palestinian authority in the last half year is not synonymous with the abdication of the Palestinian national rights, for many Palestinians do not accept Arafat's leadership or his peace process. The frightening possibility that stares Palestinians in the face, however, is that Palestinian national rights may have little chance of being achieved through any process other than that which Arafat has now launched, because most of the Arab states have made it clear that they are prepared to make peace with Israel even if the Palestinian problem remains unresolved. In other words, the Palestinians are discovering that they may be relegated to a fate along the lines of Lebanon during its civil war, Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia, Iraq and other distressed lands — chronic domestic strife, human suffering, national denial, and the rule of local political gangs, while the rest of the world shrugs its shoulders in emotional sadness but political disinterest.

This prospect is so demeaning for a Palestinian people who have struggled for their rights for nearly a century that it is unlikely to materialise. Unlikely, but still possible. This is why Palestinians are so desperate to get out of their present predicament, even at the risk of using their guns against each other. This is also what is happening in most of the rest of the Arab World, by the way — disenchanted, scared people turning to religion, and even to violence, to challenge or to change their political leaderships and their national policies.

Palestine is doing today what the rest of the Arabs did from the period between 1920 and the 1960s: it's trying to change from a situation of foreign occupation to one of self-rule and independence, and in the process domestic groups are competing for power. The fact that the Palestinians are the last Arabs struggling for independence, while the rest of the region seems to have taken its modern political shape, scares many Palestinians, because they fear that their rights might be sacrificed in the end to the region's obsession with stability and security.

This makes Arafat's challenge all the more urgent. He must improve the terms of the peace accord or implement it more quickly and meaningfully. How he responds to this challenge will largely determine if Palestine moves towards real national independence and rights, or if it slips into the bloody and neglected margins of modern history, where fear, anger and violence are chronic, and nobody cares.

Can Arafat survive Gaza shootings?

By Robert Mahoney
Reuter

GAZA — Palestinians had long expected tensions between Islamic opponents of the PLO-Israel peace deal and Yasser Arafat's fledgling government to burst into the open.

But when Arab actually began shooting Arab in the streets of Gaza, birthplace of the uprising against Israel, Palestinians were traumatised.

Threats of revenge for the killing of at least 13 Gazans by Mr. Arafat's police last Friday are now scrawled on walls and predictions of a slide to a Lebanese-style civil war abound.

As the initial shock subsides, Gazans are asking: — Will the narrow band of Mediterranean coast crammed with one million impoverished and stateless people turn into another Beirut? — Will the experiment in Palestinian self-rule, cornerstone of entire Arab-Israeli peace process, be undermined?

Can Arafat survive the killing of his own people? "We have all the ingredients for a civil war," replies Iyad Sarraj, a psychiatrist and member of a human rights watchdog group.

"Polarisation is so acute, arms are everywhere, tension is high, and more than anything we have undisciplined armies on both sides," he said, referring to Mr. Arafat's security forces and gunmen from the Muslim groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

M. KAHIL



But he, like many other prominent Gazans, does not believe that the religious and clan differences are as explosive here as in Beirut.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad, both foes of Mr. Arafat's peace deal with Israel, have pulled back from the brink of civil strife.

"Hamas is very concerned there be no civil war against Palestinians," said Sayyed Abu Musameh, a Hamas leader who tried to mediate to cool passions after the

shootings.

Hamas urged its fighters to turn their guns on Israelis, not Palestinians, as radical gunmen and those who had lost relatives vowed vengeance.

The more moderate political elements in Hamas complained to Mr. Arafat that the shooting had weakened them and their attempts to reach a political accommodation with the Palestinian authority.

Mr. Arafat, ignoring calls

from Israel and hardliners in his own Fatah wing of the PLO for a crackdown, has courted not clubbed Hamas, which claims a 30 per cent following in Gaza.

Behind the militant Hamas rhetoric, much of which comes from outside, many leaders in Gaza do not want to see Mr. Arafat toppled, Hamas sources say.

They do not like the peace process but realise they cannot halt it. They believe Mr. Arafat is the only one who

can steer the Palestinians through the shoals of the first stages of the self-rule deal with Israel.

"If we want influence to shape the outcome we have to talk with Arafat... and continue our struggle against Israel," one Hamas official said.

Such sentiments are spurned by Hamas radicals who openly call Mr. Arafat a traitor, doing Israel's dirty work in Gaza and the West

Bank. They say Mr. Arafat has no mandate to rule. Even if Hamas as an organisation vents its wrath on Israel rather than the PLO, they will avenge the deaths.

"There is a possibility of assassinations on both sides, and that could hit Arafat," said Mr. Sarraj, who predicted a rollercoaster of violence and suppression for some time to come.

The prospect of instability could deter those private investors and international donors whose money Mr. Arafat needs to rebuild an economy shattered by occupation and by Israel's refusal for security reasons to allow in Gazan workers.

Just hours before Friday's shooting, the United Nations senior official for Gaza and the West Bank, Terje Larsen, warned donors the peace process and the legitimacy of the Palestinian authority faced potential collapse unless money arrived.

Haidar Abdul Shafi, a former peace negotiator trying to mediate between Hamas and the PLO, blamed Israel for not implementing the deal it signed with Mr. Arafat fully and quickly. Gazans had seen little economic or social benefit from peace and were losing faith in the process, he said.

Asked if Mr. Arafat had lost his legitimacy, Mr. Abdul Shafi was diplomatic.

"It is too drastic to say that... The work of the national authority is less than we expected, there are differences all around. (But) we are not silent. We hope things will improve."

U.S. wants to expand NATO, boost CSCE

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuter

WASHINGTON — The United States is planning a major shift of emphasis on European security policy aimed at quickly expanding NATO while boosting the 33-nation European security conference, U.S. officials say.

They say the aim is to better address the needs of former Soviet-bloc states that have thrown off communism and are now in a hurry to reach Western economic prosperity levels and assure their security in the post-cold war world.

Since the Berlin Wall fell five years ago, these states have been clamouring to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the European Union and any other Western grouping that will have them.

Until recently, the U.S.-led Western alliance had been holding them at arm's length, offering them "part-

nership" with NATO but being vague on when they can actually join.

Now, the idea is to admit the first wave of new members, widely expected to comprise Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, sooner rather than later — in three to five years, U.S. officials say.

NATO ministerial meetings early next month are expected to agree guidelines for taking on new members, which will then face a difficult period of adjusting to alliance requirements on equipment and training, as well as financial costs.

But State Department officials say they have persuaded the Pentagon to stop dragging its feet over such issues. "The department of defence was saying up to two weeks ago that anything before the year 2000 was unrealistic," one official said. "They're not saying that now."

One of the main problems with NATO expansion

has long been that Russia, which is highly unlikely to be offered membership, strongly opposes the inclusion of its former Warsaw Pact allies in the alliance.

But Washington now maintains this is not an insuperable obstacle. "Key people (in Russia) have accepted the fact that NATO expansion is inevitable," said an administration official. "All they want is for the process to happen in a transparent manner."

If so, there has been little public sign of it so far.

"What we are objecting to is expansion of NATO to the direction of the borders of the Russian federation, without giving the Russian federation a chance to be within NATO," a senior Russian official said in Washington last week. He added that the move could lead to calls for rearmament in Russia.

U.S. officials say that NATO is a security

ity concerns are not uppermost in the minds of East European states.

"If the European Union was moving quicker, these guys wouldn't even be trying to get into NATO. What they need is the economics," said a senior official. The EU is not expected to admit the East Europeans before the turn of the century.

Enter the other "track" of the new U.S. policy — expanding the role of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Born in the 1970s as a forum for debating East-West détente and human rights, the CSCE has since the end of the cold war been held up as a possible super-organisation to control European security. Russia, which belongs to CSCE, would like it to dominate over NATO.

But the CSCE has so far failed to live up to its promise, held back from effective action by its rule of

near-consensus and by the determination of Western states that NATO will remain the top security body in Europe.

Despite some useful work in tackling ethnic problems in the Baltic states, the CSCE has made little headway in resolving the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and plans for it to send a peacekeeping force there now look in trouble.

The United States, after years of paying lip service to the organisation, now says its talk of upgrading the CSCE is for real — despite the view of sceptics that it is designed mainly to compensate Russia for the expansion of NATO.

Officials say as evidence of this that a tussle within the U.S. administration over whether President Clinton should attend a CSCE summit in Budapest Dec. 5-6 has been decided in favour of him going.

The officials are still declining to discuss exactly what new powers the CSCE

could be given, or how it is going to overcome the consensus rule that has shackled it hitherto.

However, some officials have hinted that the CSCE, which currently has a tiny secretariat based in Vienna, could be given a more powerful council similar to that which NATO has, and may be renamed an organisation instead of a conference.

Apart from "preventive diplomacy" to head off new Yugoslavia-style wars, something the CSCE has already attempted with limited success, they suggest energy and environment questions could rise up its agenda.

Another suggestion is that it could take over responsibility for agreements preventing arms proliferation.

"Everything the (East European) emerging democracies need can be made available through the CSCE, but can't be through NATO," one official said.



Gabriela Sabatini returns a shot during her Virginia Slims final against Lindsay Davenport (AFP photo)

Sabatini captures Slims title ending 30-month dry spell

NEW YORK (AP) — After wandering the tennis wastelands for more than 2½ years, Gabriela Sabatini has once again discovered the winning touch. It may have come just in time to save women's tennis.

"It's not just winning the title," Sabatini said after taking the season-ending Virginia Slims Championships Sunday. "It means more the way I won the title, the way I played. I was confident the whole week."

Her return to form was the good news for women's tennis, which has experienced plenty of the other kind.

This was the week that Martina Navratilova retired. Monica Seles is still nowhere to be seen on a tennis court.

Jennifer Capriati has just begun a comeback after being known in the past year for her escapades with police. Steffi Graf, while still No. 1, is reportedly ready to undergo surgery on her bad back.

Just when it looked darkest, Sabatini again became a bright light.

Six years ago, Sabatini won this unique 16-player tournament, when she followed two years later by winning the U.S. Open, she was considered to be on the verge of stardom.

Instead, she soon became a "whatever happened to..." and fell from third to ninth in the world.

Her last title came in May 1992, when she won the Italian Open. A year later, she sustained her most shocking loss, bowing in the 1993 French Open quarterfinals to Mary Joe Fernandez after jumping out to what appeared to be an insurmountable 6-1, 5-1 lead.

"That was the toughest one," Sabatini admits. "I was

winning that match so easy and playing great that year. I really thought I had a chance to win the tournament."

"After I lost that match, I was so frustrated, so disappointed, that it didn't go my way that it took me actually a few weeks to forget about it. ...It was really tough, you know, to forget about that and to start playing again, start being focused again."

She solved all those problems Sunday when she beat 18-year-old Lindsay Davenport 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 in the only best-of-5-sets final the women play. On this day at Madison Square Garden, it was Davenport who was unable to cope with a plethora of unsolvable problems presented by Sabatini.

"I think when I didn't start off that well, I got a little frustrated, but she was part of the reason," Davenport said. "She was chipping balls low and top-spinning them high, and hitting them short, hitting them deep, and I couldn't get a rhythm, so she was definitely one of the major reasons."

It was at times an odd match, one in which Sabatini always seemed to be in control, but one in which neither player was able to consistently hold serve.

Davenport began the match by holding at love. The next time she held her service, she was down a set and a trailing 4-1 in the second. "I knew what I had to do," Sabatini said. "She hits the ball hard and very deep, so I knew I had to play deep and my shots had to be very aggressive and move her around. I also had to try to mix the game, not to let her play the same."

It worked to perfection. One of the biggest hitters in

the women's game when her feet are set, Davenport was kept on the move by Sabatini, who kept changing spins, pace and direction.

Davenport began the third set by breaking Sabatini at 15, aided by three double-faults, the Argentine's ninth, 10th and 11th of the match. And when she broke Sabatini again in the seventh game, Davenport put the set back on serve.

But she had to serve again with Sabatini leading 5-4. This time, like so many times during the match, she failed to hold serve.

The final point came on a perfectly crafted backhand passing shot set up when Davenport's forehand hit the net and bounced high, that left her vulnerable and standing near the net.

Sabatini came into this tournament unseeded, after defeating Navratilova, Julie Halard of France, No. 8 Kimiko Date of Japan and Davenport. Sabatini moved up one spot in the world rankings, to eighth.

Davenport said she wasn't the same player who had advanced to the title match by defeating Germany's Anke Huber, fourth-seeded Jana Novotna of Czech Republic and No. 5 Mary Pierce of France. Despite the loss, her ranking rose from seventh to six, switching places with Navratilova.

"This was by far my biggest and my best result," Davenport said. "I made a lot of errors and I was pretty nervous."

"If I could get in this position a little more, I'll feel a little more calm and relaxed out there."

"But this week has taught me that I really like tennis. This is what it's for."

Sampras boosts ranking with ATP win

FRANKFURT (AP) — Two Grand Slams, eight other titles, record earnings, top ranking safe. Not a bad year. But Pete Sampras thinks it could have been better.

Sampras won the Australian Open in January, Wimbledon in the summer, and the IBM/ATP Tour world championship for the second time Sunday.

"This ends the year on a great, great note," Sampras said after beating Boris Becker 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4.

"It gives me a bit of satisfaction. It's a good win here because the fall hasn't been so great," said Sampras, who also won here in 1991.

The American collected \$1,225 million for his victory and brought his 1994 earnings to \$3,607,812, an annual record for the tour.

Sampras began the year so strongly that he looked almost invincible. But injuries slowed him after his second Wimbledon title and he was beaten in the round of 16 at the U.S. Open.

Defeated by Andre Agassi and Becker last month on European Indoor Courts took some shine off his crown.

Although he lost to Becker at the start of the round-robin portion of the world championship, Sampras bounced back Sunday with an impressive performance. And he also beat Agassi in the semifinals.

Sampras, 23, is the first player to stay atop for the entire year since Ivan Lendl in 1987.

"It's a great accomplishment. It just proves that I have been really consistent even though I pulled out of six events. Being injured right after Wimbledon was very frustrating and the Open experience was very discouraging. I still maintained that No. 1 ranking by a pretty good margin and I hope to continue that."

"I got Andre right behind me, dying to be No. 1 so I just need to keep working hard."

Although beaten by



World No. 1 Pete Sampras jumps in joy after winning the ATP Tour tournament in Frankfurt (AFP photo)

Becker in five of their previous six indoor matches, Sampras rose to the occasion Sunday, even as 9,000 fans in the festhall cheered for his rival.

He ended the year with a 74-11 record, and is now 6-5 against Becker in his career. Becker, who was also seeking his second title after winning in 1992, collected \$640,000 for his runner-up finish.

The German, who will be 27 Tuesday, thundered 30 aces past Sampras, who only had 9. But Becker also had 12 double-faults, while Sampras had three in the two-hour, 39-minute match.

"I returned a lot better than when I played him Wednesday. I put a lot of pressure on his serve, and as a result he hit a number of double-faults. It played a huge part in the match," Sampras said.

Sampras lost his serve only once, and that cost him the first set.

Leading ATP rankings

Leading men's rankings issued by the ATP Tour Monday:

1. Pete Sampras (U.S.) 5,097
2. Andre Agassi (U.S.) 3,249
3. Boris Becker (Germany) 3,237
4. Sergi Bruguera (Spain) 3,007
5. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia) 2,936
6. Michael Chang (U.S.) 2,647
7. Stefan Edberg (Sweden) 2,471
8. Alberto Berasategui (Spain) 2,470
9. Michael Stich (Germany) 2,380
10. Todd Martin (U.S.) 2,307
11. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia) 2,174
12. Wayne Ferreira (S. Africa) 2,121
13. Jim Courier (U.S.) 1,909
14. Marc Rosset (Switzerland) 1,707
15. Andrei Medvedev (Ukraine) 1,655

Trail Blazers end losing streak

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP) — With James Robinson filling in at point guard and Rod Strickland, Terry Porter, Negele Knight and Clyde Drexler out with injuries, the Portland Trail Blazers had just enough to end a three-game losing streak.

Robinson had 24 points, eight assists and only six turnovers as the Trail Blazers rallied to beat the Detroit Pistons 98-96 Sunday night.

"It wasn't difficult playing 48 minutes ... I just rested during timeouts and free throws," Robinson said. "We really can play well without Clyde and Rod. We've just got to keep playing hard."

Robinson, who averaged 11.6 minutes last season after leaving Alabama following his junior year, also held Pistons point guard Lindsey Hunter scoreless. Robinson and Hunter were high school teammates in Jackson, Miss.

"We didn't have much to go on the bench," Blazers coach P.J. Carlesimo said. "I thought James did exceptionally well."

In other games, New Jersey edged the Los Angeles Clippers 98-97 and Sacramento beat Cleveland 96-88.

Clifford Robinson scored 26 points, Buck Williams had 15 points and 12 rebounds and Tracy Murray added 14 points for Portland. Joe Dumars led Detroit with 35 points, 22 in the first half.

"We were down a lot of points in the second half but played hard," Carlesimo said. "The key to the game for us was our offensive rebounding and taking care of the ball."

Chris Dumble had 15 rebounds — seven in the fourth quarter — as Portland outrebounded Detroit 46-24.

"You can't let a team crash the offensive boards like Portland did and expect to win," Detroit coach Don Chaney said.

"You can't allow a team that many easy second shots. I told our guys about their rebounding ability before the game, and I said it again at halftime and wrote it on the blackboard, but we just didn't get it done."

Strickland, who broke his right wrist Tuesday night against Phoenix, joined Porter and Knight on the injured list before the game. Porter is recovering from surgery on his right ankle and night has tendinitis in his left ankle. Drexler is out with a sprained ankle.

Clifford Robinson made



Orlando Magic guard Nick Anderson (right) slams a basket over New Jersey centre Benoit Benjamin in their NBA match. The Magic defeated the Nets 113-103 (AFP photo)

two free throws with 15 seconds left to give Portland a 96-94 lead, and added another with 8.7 seconds remaining to increase the lead to 3.

Grant Hill, who had 17 points, made two free throws with 6.2 seconds left to draw Detroit to 97-96, but Murray followed with a free throw with 5.2 seconds left and the Pistons failed to get a shot off in the final seconds.

"In those final seconds we got a couple of huge rebounds," Carlesimo said. "It was ugly sometimes but we found a way to win."

The Pistons, who led 82-73 after three quarters, had an 84-79 advantage with 9 minutes to go, but the Blazers tied it at 94 with 46 seconds remaining on Williams' put-back.

James Robinson then drew an offensive foul on Dumars. Williams missed a 12-foot baseline shot with 18 seconds left. But Clifford Robinson was fouled on the rebound.

"Winning tonight is a confidence builder going into our road trip to Texas," said Murray.

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Los Angeles almost got its first victory of the season, but Armon Gilliam dunked over two defenders with 7.7 seconds to play to

give New Jersey the winning points.

The Clippers' last chance ended when Pooh Richardson's desperation drive just before the buzzer was swatted away by P.J. Brown.

Los Angeles outplayed the nets most of the game, and the Clippers' led by as much as 15 in the third quarter.

"It was no moral victory," Terry Dehere said. "A loss is a loss and this one was tough."

Derrick Coleman had 20 points and 14 rebounds and Kenny Anderson had 20 points and 10 assists for New Jersey. Richardson led Los Angeles with 19 points.

At Sacramento, rookie Brian Grant had 18 points and 10 rebounds off the bench and scored 6 of Sacramento's last 7 points. Fellow Rookie Michael Smith scored 6 of his 13 points in the fourth quarter.

"Michael makes as few mistakes as any rookie I've seen in 15 years," Kings coach Gary St. Jean said.

Duane Causwell added 14 points, and Guard Randy Brown sparked the team with five assists in place of Spud Webb, who sat out with a sprained ankle.

Tyrone Hill had 17 points and 20 rebounds for Cleveland.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Prince Abdullah heads JSF

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah will again head the newly-formed Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF). The reshuffled JSF now includes Dr. Mamdouh Abbadi, the mayor of Amman, as vice chairman, Ghaleb Abu Jaber, Sultan Shreideh, Haitham Majali, Fahd Bayari, Dr. Bassam Haroun and Ahmad Al Udwan.

Jordan's body-building team leaves for World Championship

AMMAN (Petra) — Mustafa Hasanien and Iyad Mahmoud, left Amman for Shanghai, China, Sunday to represent Jordan in the World Body-Building Championships. Twenty-seven countries are taking part in the five-day competition.

Tennis stars agree to donate prize money

FRANKFURT (AFP) — The worlds top tennis players have agreed to donate hundreds of thousands of dollars in prize money to help create a special "Kids Fund." Altogether one and a half million dollars will be raised from tour and world prize money donated by players. In addition big name players will appear ten times a year at special clinics, autograph and photo sessions and other promotional events in a bid to attract more young people to the game.

ATP wants to slow the game

FRANKFURT (AFP) — In an attempt to enhance interest in the game, tennis officials are planning to slow the indoor game with the help of advanced technology and to regulate television exposure. Responding to common complaints that the indoor game is too fast, with few rallies between players serving aces at 200kmh, The Association of Tennis Professionals tour is developing technology to overcome the problem. The tour is working with the French Tennis Federation and the International Tennis Federation to develop a machine that will measure the speed of specific balls on a specific surface, Mark Miles, chief executive officer of the IBM/ATP Tour, told reporters Sunday. Similar tests with balls will be conducted in Wimbledon "to determine an appropriate balance for play on grass."

Ma bids to woo back world champ Liu

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese athletics coach Ma Junren mae a direct attempt to woo back world champion Liu Dong into his "army" of world-class athletes this month, according to the China Youth Daily. Disciplinarian Ma reportedly went to Liu's home and admitted he may have been "too extreme" with her in the past and "made some mistakes." Liu, 21 next month, won the world 1,500m title at Stuttgart last year but then fell out with her mentor after telling him she wanted a boyfriend and to grow her hair. Ma, who also trains 10,000m champion Wang Junxia and 3,000m title holder Qu Yunxia and is equally famous for feeding them on a diet of turtle's blood and a secret elixir, promptly threw her out of his Liaoning-based team, arguing she had a "rebellious nature."

Prince Al-Waleed distributes cars to players

RIYADH (AP) — A Saudi prince awarded each of the kingdom's 37 top soccer stars a Chevrolet Limousine after they won the Gulf Cup championship last week, sports officials disclosed Sunday. Insisting on anonymity, they said the gifts presented by Prince Al-Waleed Bin Talal Al Saud were worth \$750,000. Prince Al-Waleed, a nephew of King Fahd, made headlines by buying stock in the Euro Disney theme park in France earlier this year. He is a major shareholder of U.S. Citicorp, and has shares in Saks Fifth Avenue, the Fairmont Hotel chain in the United States and Canada's Four Seasons Hotel Inc.

Batistuta equals Italian scoring record

NAPLES (R) — Gabriel Batistuta equalled a 32-year-old Italian record when he scored for Fiorentina against Napoli Sunday. The goal meant the Argentine World Cup player had scored in the first 10 league games of the season, matching the run enjoyed by Ezio Pascutti for Bologna at the start of the 1962-63 campaign.

Nine Kuwaitis banned for 3 months after shopping trip

KUWAIT (R) — Nine Kuwaiti soccer internationals have been suspended for three months after they went shopping without permission in the United Arab Emirates. The Kuwait news agency KUNA quoted the country's football association secretary Mohammad Othman Sunday as saying the players were punished for "ignoring instructions by officials." The nine first-team players had been dropped from last Wednesday's prestigious Gulf Cup final 2-0 by Saudi Arabia following their shopping trip to Dubai, about 100 kms from Abu Dhabi where the match was played.

Indian celebration

The Indian community in Jordan celebrates Guru Nanak Jayanti on Friday, Nov. 25, at the premises of the Embassy of India. All Indian nationals and spouses are welcome to the 12 noon to 2 p.m. event, which will include a "langur."

Wheelchair athletes end marathon

ALMA-ATA (R) — A team of physically handicapped men ended a 9,000 kilometres wheelchair "super-marathon" across the former Soviet Union Sunday and urged governments worldwide to recognise the rights and needs of the disabled.

Fifteen paraplegic athletes, representing each of the ex-Soviet republics, began their journey on June 20 in St Petersburg, passed through the capitals of the newly independent states and made it to Alma-Ata five months later.

Hand-peddalling their U.S.-made tricycles in bright sunshine at a fairly steady 20 kilometres per hour on the last leg into town, the team was applauded by bystanders before pulling into a car park.

They were greeted by a brass band, folk singers and civic leaders bearing traditional gifts of bread and salt. The officials made brief speeches praising the team's manhood and heroism.

The organiser of the event, Dmitry Shparo, a Russian explorer who in 1979

became the first man to ski to the North Pole, said the team had passed through trouble spots such as Abkhazia and Dushanbe, capital of troubled Tajikistan.

But it had always been helped on its way. "This shows that friendship is our tomorrow," Shparo said.

Zakir Minyashirov, the team member from Turkmenistan, told Reuters the journey should set an example to handicapped people to take up sport and "show politicians how to find a common language."

Shparo said the satisfaction of completing the journey equalled the thrill of his polar trek and helped to demonstrate that governments should treat the handicapped as real people with real rights. "In Russia and the former Soviet republics the disabled don't count as people," he said in an interview.

Four members of the team plan to go around the world on their next expedition and are deliberately planning a tough route through China, India, North Africa and South America.

Dallas win, lose two quarterbacks

DALLAS (R) — Emmitt Smith rushed for two first-quarter touchdowns and Kevin Williams returned a punt 83 yards for a score as the Dallas Cowboys survived injuries to Troy Aikman and Rodney Peete and routed the Washington Redskins, 31-7 Sunday.

Aikman directed the Cowboys (9-2) to 17 points in the first quarter before leaving in the second quarter with a sprained ligament in his left knee. Peete suffered a sprained thumb late in the third quarter and was replaced by Jason Garrett, who finished up.

In Chicago, Lewis Tillman ran for 126 yards a touchdown as the surprising Chicago Bears won their third straight game with a 20-10 victory over the Detroit Lions.

In Cincinnati, Don Majkowski's eight-yard touchdown pass to Sean Dawkins with 1:54 left lifted the Indi-

anapolis Colts to a 17-13 victory over the Cincinnati Bengals.

In Buffalo, Jim Kelly completed 32-of-44 passes for 365 yards and a pair of touchdowns to Andre Reed, who had a team-record 15 receptions, as the Buffalo Bills defeated the Green Bay Packers, 29-20.

Reed, who last week argued with Kelly on the sidelines during a loss to Pittsburgh, amassed 191 receiving yards. He hauled in scoring tosses of 15 and 10 yards as the Bills built a 27-6 half-time lead.

"He had one of the great games I have ever seen a receiver have," Green Bay head coach Paul Holmgren said.

In Denver, John Elway scored on a four-yard run with under two minutes left to rally the Denver Broncos to a 32-28 victory over the Atlanta Falcons.

In Kansas City, Kimble

Anders scored on a one-yard run midway through the fourth quarter as the Kansas City Chiefs beat the Cleveland Browns, 20-13.

Anders' touchdown broke a 13-13 tie and capped a seven-play, 61-yard drive.

At New England, Drew Bledsoe connected with Leroy Thompson on a 27-yard scoring pass in the first quarter and Matt Bahr kicked three field goals as the New England Patriots defeated the San Diego Chargers, 23-17.

At the Raiders, Jeff Hostetler threw for 308 yards and three touchdowns, including a pair to Tim Brown, as the Los Angeles Raiders held on for a 24-19 victory over the New Orleans Saints.

In Pittsburgh, Gary Anderson's 39-yard field goal with just under five minutes remaining in overtime game the Pittsburgh Steelers a 16-13 victory over the Miami Dolphins.

IN BRIEF

ada JSF

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...as vice chairman...
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Spain's Coruna look to Beбето for UEFA Cup glory

PARIS (R) — Deportivo Coruna's hopes of stepping out of the long Spanish shadows cast by Real Madrid and Barcelona over European soccer hang heavily on Brazilian World Cup striker Beбето being fit for UEFA Cup action Tuesday.

Beбето was a notable absentee as Coruna plunged to their first league defeat of the season at the weekend, a 2-0 reverse to Real Oviedo which knocked them off the top of the table.

The Brazilian faces a late fitness test on an Achilles tendon injury before knowing whether he can face German league leaders Borussia Dortmund in perhaps the most intriguing of the third round clashes.

Like Parma in Italy, Coruna have risen suddenly from obscurity to mount a sustained challenge to the best of domestic level in recent seasons.

Unlike Parma, Cup Winners' Cup victors in 1993 and runners-up this year, Coruna now need a strong European run to fulfil their ambition to become a club with a true international pedigree.

Dortmund are well aware they face a stern test of character on their visit to Spain for the first leg. Trainer Ottmar Hitzfeld said: "Deportivo Coruna are on a par with Barcelona or Real Madrid, they just don't quite such a long tradition."

Hitzfeld is also hoping his star striker Stephane Chapuisat will be fit in time for the match. The Swiss World Cup player is being treated for a bruised left foot, an injury received in the disappointing 1-1 home draw with Freiburg Saturday.

Parma, playing in the UEFA Cup this season, feature in an equally tantalising clash in northern Spain when they meet Athletic Bilbao.

The Italian League leaders will badly miss their Swedish midfielder ace Tomas Brodin who broke an ankle last week and may be out for the rest of the season.

Their Colombian striker Faustino Asprilla is also injured but Portuguese international Fernando Couto, who scored in Sunday's 2-0 win over Foggia, makes a welcome return to European competition, having missed three games through suspension.

Bilbao coach Javier Irureta does not believe Parma have been weakened. "They still have a lot of quality players to replace those who are injured," he said.

The Basque side, who knocked out Newcastle United in the last round, have Spanish international midfielder Julien Guerrero back from injury.

Italy still have four teams in with a chance of reaching the quarter-finals and all play away in the first leg.

Lazio, another side running strongly in the league, are without injured Croatian striker Alen Boksic as they travel to the other side of Europe to taste the delights of a passionate and partisan Turkish crowd when they play Trabzonspor.

Juventus visit Austria to meet Admira Wacker and Napoli go to Eintracht Frankfurt in two of three matches being played on Thursday. In the other, Nantes of France play Swiss side Sion.

Real Madrid, who won the trophy in 1985 and 1986, have a comfortable-looking trip to Odense of Denmark, who are surprised to have gone this far in the competition.

But Real's Danish forward Michael Laudrup, who makes a sentimental return home, will doubtless warn his team mates not to underestimate a side which knocked out Germany's Kaiserslautern in the last round.

European Soccer

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Auriol's world title hopes in jeopardy

CHESTER, England (AFP) — Didier Auriol's hopes of becoming the first Frenchman to capture the world title nosedived on Sunday after suffering serious damage to his Toyota Celica on the first day of the RAC Rally.

Auriol, the current leader of the drivers' championship needs only to finish in fourth place to land the title, even if nearest rival Carlos Sainz were to win.

But he plunged to 89th place, more than four minutes behind the Spaniard, after his car hit a rock and limped through the third stage with suspension, steering and driveshaft problems.

Even with three days of rallying's most notoriously fickle and unpredictable event left to run, Auriol's chances of making up the deficit look remote, although Sainz would still have to finish in the top three to claim his third title.

He battled back up the leaderboard to finish the day inside the top 40, but still a distant five minutes behind the leaders.

"That was not the way I hoped the first day would go. I wanted to take it easy and see how the others were going and pace myself," said Auriol.

"But now we must go flat out to regain a good position," he added.

Toyota boss Phil Short did his best to hide the disappointment, insisting: "I am sure he can still come back into a good position."

Rugby ready for Olympics

LONDON (AFP) — Rugby Union will make an official return to the Olympics next week and a ten-a-side version of the game is likely to feature by the 2004 Games.

The sport, which was discontinued earlier in the century, will be formally recognised as an Olympic sport at a ceremony before the game between Wales and South Africa in Cardiff next Saturday.

International Olympic Committee President Juan Antonio Samaranch and Vernon Pugh the chairman of the International Rugby Football Board will sign an agreement that will make rugby a non-participating sport in the Olympic movement.

It is likely that the agreement reached will be a compromise between the 15-man game and the sevens version.

"There seems to be increasing support for the 10-man rugby which is growing in popularity throughout the world and is used almost full-time by the southern hemisphere countries during summer training," said Pugh.

The full-sized and sevens versions of the game have been ruled out as possibilities since successful competitions like the World Cup and the Hong Kong sevens tournament already exist.

THE FORTE Grand Amman and Abu Shakra launched a joint promotional programme at a party held at the hotel on Wednesday November 8th.

For Points, which is a bookers incentive programme, is aimed at rewarding the bookers through Abu Shakra.

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1st Division Basketball Championship

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Hussein Sunday took a most important step towards maintaining their place in the first division basketball championship when they upset Al Watani 79-76 delighting hundreds of fans in their match on the Yarmouk University court in Irbid.

The win put to rest, for the time being, the grim prospect of Al Hussein's relegation for the first time since they played in the prestigious group. However, they will have to repeat their wins over Homentmen and Al Watani in the second round to hold on to fifth place in the division.

The result of Al Watani's final first round match was quite a blow to the team's player, coach and fans as they had the ambition of advancing their fifth standing this year, but now suddenly find themselves fighting to avoid relegation.

Al Watani were leading 38-34 in the first half, Homentmen are now certain to be relegated unless they defeat Al Watani and Al Hussein by a score difference in the second round, as two teams will be relegated this year.

In other matches Sunday, Al Orthodoxy could only manage a 74-64 win over the other team from

the second round!

Al Jazireh have one match left against Homentmen Wednesday.

Al Orthodoxy, who have lost the efforts of many older players, especially Murad Barakat, demonstrated that they are still a formidable force backed by the presence of Hilal Barakat, the team's undisputed star who is carrying the whole burden of scoring for his team in the absence of his elder brother.

Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxy now lead the standings with ten points, but Al Ahli leads on score difference.

The all-time rivals will clash in the much awaited first round final Nov. 23.

The Jordan Basketball Federation issued the schedule of the competition's second round which begins Nov. 26 and ends with the second Ahli-Orthodoxy final Dec. 15.

Al Hussein's team

Irbid, Al Jazireh, who gave the former champions a hard time before losing the first half 36-31.

A fourth place finisher for the past two years, Al Jazireh seem set to stay in the same position for another year after losing 73-69 to Al Jazireh. They might however take third place if they beat Al Jazireh with over 4 points in the second round.

Despite their defeats, Al Jazireh have appeared to be a highly competitive team denying the titleholders their first win under the 100-point mark when Al Ahli won 96-69, the first half ending 43-33.

Al Jazireh will next face Al Hussein Tuesday.

In Sunday's third match, Al Jazireh lost to Al Ahli

91-62, the first half ending 48-33.

Al Jazireh's plans for second place this season were upset when Al Orthodoxy defeated them 92-75 in an earlier match. They will thus have to be content with third place for the third consecutive year, unless they defeat Al Orthodoxy by over 17 points in

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Hussein score crucial victory as Watani near relegation

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Algerian opposition meets in Rome, calls for peace

ROME (Agencies) — Leading members of Algeria's opposition and civil rights groups on Monday called for peace talks to end fighting which they say risks plunging the country into a full-blown civil war.

Former Algerian President Ahmad Ben Bella criticised violence employed by the military-backed government in the conflict on the opening day of a two-day gathering in Rome to discuss the crisis.

The Algerian government is not taking part and has attacked the Rome discussions, saying it never sought outside mediation and would not tolerate interference in its internal affairs.

"We are seeing the first signs of what could become a full-blown civil war. There is too much blood — there must be a dialogue," Mr. Ben Bella told representatives from 12 opposition groups taking part in the talks.

At least 10,000 people have been killed in Algeria since the army cancelled elections in 1992 in which the

fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) had taken a commanding lead. Western experts put the death toll in the conflict at up to 20,000.

"Many of the civilian victims are not Islamists but people who made the mistake of living in the wrong neighbourhood," said Mr. Ben Bella, 75.

"I call on politicians to calm their spirits and to put a stop to the violence, from wherever it comes," said Mr. Ben Bella, who heads the moderate Movement for Democracy.

Abdennour Ali Yahya, a former minister who now leads the country's League for Human Rights, said the rate of killings by the authorities and opposition guerrillas had increased drastically recently.

"Hundreds of people are dying every day," he said. "Every morning, dozens of Algerians are found dead by the side of the road. The whole country is affected."

Torture was common for anyone taken into police cus-

tody and deaths were now being reported in every village, he added.

Mr. Ben Yahya said violence had skyrocketed since talks between the government and the outlawed FIS collapsed last month, after the government accused the FIS of backing fundamentalist violence that has killed some 70 foreigners.

The senior FIS delegate to the conference, Anwar Haddam, denied that his group encouraged the killing of foreigners.

"We call this terrorism and we condemn these acts," said Mr. Haddam, who is the leader of the FIS's parliamentary delegation to the United States and Europe.

He blamed the military government for creating the tension which engendered the violence and said those who carried out the killings had to take political responsibility for them.

"If we cannot guarantee the safety of Algerians in Algeria how can that of foreigners be guaranteed?" he asked.

Mr. Haddam added that his group had offered to send a delegation to Algeria for talks and was waiting for assurances that their safety would be guaranteed.

"We are open to any proposal," he said, pledging that the front would stick to the principles of political pluralism and would not seek to change the constitution other than by legal means.

The talks are being held at the Roman Catholic Sant'Egidio community, which has a record of successful international peace brokering.

The Vatican has distanced itself from the talks, saying they were an independent initiative on the part of Sant'Egidio.

The Algerian government refused to send a representative, while militantly anti-Islamist groups were also absent. The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) — the armed wing of the FIS — was not represented.

(Continued on page 7)



An Algerian mother and her children are overcome by emotion in Sidi Abdellah, near Mahelma, as a result of the death of her husband, a policeman who was gunned down by a group of 100 fundamentalists (AFP photo)



SHOW OF STRENGTH: Armed members of the Fatah Hawks swarm a truck during a demonstration in Gaza City on Monday. More than 15,000 people took to the streets in

support of Yasser Arafat following heavy clashes with Islamic rioters that left 16 people dead on Friday (see page one) (AFP photo)

Shekel weakens

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli shekel weakened against the dollar and basket of foreign currencies for the second consecutive day on Monday as the Central bank intervened to prop up the local currency, dealers said.

The shekel's weakness was a result of rumours of an impending shekel devaluation as banks speculated by buying dollars heavily.

The Bank of Israel intervened to moderate the fall of the shekel.

"The dollar opened trade at 3.026 shekels per dollar and reached a high of 3.070 shekels before the Bank of Israel intervened by supplying huge amounts of dollars to the hungry banks, thus supporting the shekel," said Ilan Zucka of Bank Mizrahi. "The turnover was enormous."

The shekel closed the daily tender at 3.034 shekels per dollar against 3.026 shekels on Friday and 2.995 shekels on Thursday.

The basket closed at 3.3804 shekels per basket unit against 3.3737 on Friday and 3.3456 on Thursday.

The shekel traded against the yen at 3.0761 shekels per 100 yen, unchanged from Friday, and against the mark at 1.9439 shekels per mark from 1.9432 on Friday.

In late afternoon the dollar traded at 3.0369 shekels.

Menem in Syria, may try peace mediation

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — President Carlos Menem of Argentina arrived Monday for talks with Syrian officials amid reports he would offer to mediate between Syria and Israel.

Mr. Menem, who is of Syrian origin, was greeted at the airport by President Hafez Al Assad. After a 21-gun salvo and inspection of the guard of honour, Mr. Assad and his guest drove to Tishrin palace.

It was the first visit to Syria by an Argentine president. The official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) quoted Mr. Menem as saying before he left Buenos Aires for Damascus that he was very proud to visit Syria, "the homeland of my father and grandfather."

He said he looked forward to meeting "my relatives and friends" and that "my meeting with President Hafez Assad will make the visit the happiest of my trips and tours."

An official announcement released in Damascus on Sunday said Mr. Menem would hold talks with his Syrian counterpart. The announcement did not say what subjects the two leaders will discuss.

However, reports from Buenos Aires said Mr. Menem had expressed a willingness to play the role of

mediator between Syria and Israel.

He was quoted as saying at a reception at the Syrian Club in Buenos Aires that he would discuss with Mr. Assad "the need to establish peace in the Middle East" and that he was prepared to "take part in the peace process" between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

In Israel, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres welcomed a possible Menem mediation bid, saying, "I'm sure that President Menem is capable of carrying important messages from Israel to Syria and from Syria to Israel."

He mentioned Mr. Menem's Syrian origins and added that "the fact that a president from this origin is supporting so much and so seriously the peace process in the Middle East and coexistence of different religions and ethnic groups in Argentina itself speak very much to his credit."

Government ministers and around 100 businessmen accompanied Mr. Menem for the three-day trip.

The two presidents had a first session of talks at the guest palace of Tishrin, where Mr. Menem was staying. Mr. Assad spokesman Gibrán Kurieh told AFP.

Syrian vice presidents



Carlos Menem

Abdul Halim Khaddam and Zuheir Masharka, Prime Minister Mahmoud Al Zoubi, Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa and Justice Minister Hassan Hassan attended the meeting, Mr. Kurieh added.

A seminar has been set for Tuesday for Syrian and Argentine businessmen, who are expected to reactivate bilateral trade, scientific and cultural agreements signed in 1989.

On Wednesday, Mr. Menem was to visit his old family house in the village of Yabrud, 80 kilometres north of Damascus.

"I am proud to visit my ancestors' homeland. I am proud to meet President Assad, and I am sure that our talks will be fruitful and successful," Mr. Menem told the Syrian news agency before leaving Buenos Aires.

COLUMN

Queen Elizabeth wins lottery

LONDON (R) — Queen Elizabeth was among the winners in the first draw of Britain's new National Lottery. Today's newspaper reported in its Monday edition. Britain's richest woman won £10 (\$15.70) but she will have to share it with the other members of a 20-strong royal syndicate including her husband, Prince Philip, and the Queen Mother, it said. They will each get 50 pence (80 cents). The royal punters were among 1.1 million Britons who won the minimum prize in the lottery by picking three of the six numbers drawn Saturday evening. The queen sat alone in Windsor Castle watching the draw live on television. Today said, "She loves a flutter," a royal source told the newspaper. "She gets very excited when something she has bet on comes in even second or third."

Diana documentary sells to 21 countries

LONDON (AFP) — A television documentary highlighting the life of Princess Diana and broadcast Saturday evening in Britain has been sold to 21 countries, producers Granada and London Weekend Television said Sunday. The documentary, Diana: Portrait Of A Princess, was based on royal author Andrew Morton's recent bestseller Diana: Her New Life and uses an actress to portray one of his main sources whose identity has not been revealed. Mr. Morton also scored a major hit with his earlier work Diana: Her True Story, based on witness accounts by close friends of her life in the royal household who described her as fraught with misery and prone to bouts of bulimia and severe depression. Among networks to buy the film are U.S. broadcaster CBS and stations in Australia, France, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Russia and South Africa. The film crew followed Princess Diana around for several months after she decided to limit public engagements last December, a move which they noted had apparently not stopped her from keeping going her ambiguous relationship with the press. Newspapers have continually rushed to print exclusive pictures of the princess visiting homeless people in London. Diana is described in the film as a young woman trying to determine which way her new life should go now she has separated from her husband Prince Charles. Her chief concern remains the future of her sons Princes William and Harry. Her astrologer is shown as saying she knew Prince Charles did not love Princess Diana even before they married in 1981.

Chinese police illegally detain anti-smoking elders

BEIJING (R) — Chinese police illegally detained two prominent, elderly anti-smoking activists for 18 days after they took their campaign to a Beijing store and later paid them compensation, officials said Monday. "The police have acknowledged their error and apologized to the two old men," said Zhang Yifang, of the National Smoking and Health Association under the Ministry of Health. "They have admitted that the incarceration was wrongful and have paid compensation to the men." Mr. Zhang told Reuters. Mr. Zhang said his association had invited activists He Cai, 67, of central Hunan province, and Zhuo Xiangbiao, 64, from northern Shanxi province, to the Chinese capital to help promote anti-smoking efforts to be held in Beijing in 1997. He and Zhuo already were revered for walking 10,000 "Li" — about 5,000 kilometres — advanced age last year in a modern "long march" against smoking. While in Beijing last March, the two took their campaign to a tobacco counter at one of China's biggest department stores, where they tried to pose with anti-smoking arm bands in front of displays for foreign cigarettes.

Experts review water and optimisation in agriculture

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Arabs and Israelis might be able to resolve Middle Eastern political problems through the three-year-old peace negotiations, but the chronic shortage of water in the mostly arid region could be addressed only through wise management since there is not enough to go around, European and Arab experts said Monday.

Agriculture is an area where users particularly tend to waste water through inappropriate use due to either carelessness or lack of expert advice in most countries in the region, the experts told the first working session of a three-day seminar on "Optimisation of Water in Agriculture."

Representatives of more than a dozen Arab and European countries and international and regional organisations are participating in the seminar, organised by the French embassy in Amman in cooperation with the University of Jordan and the Jordan Valley Authority and partly financed by the Delegation of the Commission of the European Union in Amman.

The focus on the meeting is a close assessment of the water situation in the Middle East and how the region's farmers could make optimum use of the available water, which international studies have found to be far short of the actual needs of the region regardless of political agreements.

The seminar, formally opened by Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Issadat, on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (see page 3), was described as a forum for "providing practical results available to farmers throughout the Middle East" rather than a "formal meeting between exchanging theoretical points of view in a closed circuit" by French Ambassador Bernard Bajelet.

Yves Gazzo, head of the European Commission delegation in Amman, spoke briefly about the problems faced by the region's countries in view of the high rate of population growth, clima-

tic conditions, limited water resources and the rising demand for water in the agricultural sector.

Noting that experts have set a 500 cubic metres per capita consumption as the acceptable base for any country, Mr. Gazzo said water use in Jordan (where per capita consumption was 245 cubic metres in 1993) and other countries in the region were already below the base line.

As such, he said, there is an urgent need to coordinate efforts in water to manage existing as well as future water resources in an optimal way.

Among the topics under review at the seminar are irrigation methods and techniques presently used in the region as well as proposed means to raise efficient use of agriculture water, land and water policies, water resources development in Syria, irrigation management, vegetable production and irrigation in Turkey, Sudan's experience in horticultural crops, means to improve water resources, use of treated water for irrigation, and water conservation methods.

Aydis Serpekian, an official of the Jordan Valley Authority, presented a detailed situation report on irrigation in Jordan, giving the areas of irrigation, number of dams and reservoirs and the Kingdom's plans to maintain and develop its water sector through projects which have national and regional dimensions.

Shawkat Sarsour of the Palestine Agricultural Relief Committee, a non-governmental organisation based in Jerusalem, presented an assessment of Palestinian agriculture and the constraints imposed on Palestinian farming by the Israeli occupation authorities (see page 2).

Mahmoud Awad of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) reviewed the land and water policies in the region. In a question and answer session, he emphasised the need to introduce control measures as a means to ensure optimum use of water and prevent waste through imposing realistic tariffs.

"When you know that you are paying for it, you will get up and close a (leaking) tap," Mr. Awad said.

Presented during Monday's session were also working papers that detailed optimisation of water in Palestine agriculture by a Palestinian expert, constraints on high efficiency in irrigation management by Ross Hagan of the United States, information system for irrigation management in the Jordan Valley by Dr. Mohammad Shatanawi of the Water and Environmental Research Centre, effective water use in Jordan by Abdel Nabi Fardous of the Jordan Environmental Society, supplemental irrigation by Theil Oweis of the International Centre for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas, and economising water in irrigation by Patrice Guinet of Agro-Resources of France.

Professor Peter Wolff of the University of Kassel, Germany, described "wise water management" as one of the "most crucial challenges facing the Near East."

Noting that the normal flows of most Near Eastern rivers and most of the rechargeable groundwater resources are fully allocated and new water resources were scarce, Prof. Wolff called for innovative approaches to water management.

The professor also briefly reviewed water management in Germany, which, he said, is also facing a water shortage.

Prof. Wolff said Jordan's irrigation sector "will have to get along with less and less water and will be forced to use water of marginal quality" and called on the sector to adjust to the situation "as fast as possible."

"This can only be achieved through intensive research work, especially on-farm research, adjustments to the legal framework, institutional developments, establishment of supporting and extension services etc.," he told the gathering. "There is no general model applicable to Jordan. Jordan, as all countries, will have to find its own way of dealing with the problem."

"But is always very helpful to look at problems other countries are facing and how they are being solved."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syria says 'mild' quake hit country

DAMASCUS (R) — An earthquake hit northeast Syria on Sunday but caused no casualties or damage, officials said. They said the quake, which they termed as "mild," measured 1.5 on the Richter scale and lasted less than 10 seconds at around 1430 GMT. It was felt by residents in the cities of Dayr Azzawr, Rakka and Hasakka, northeast of Damascus. Turkish monitors said a strong earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale hit northeast Syria on Sunday and was felt in four provinces of Turkey. A quake of that strength is powerful enough to cause heavy damage in a populated area. Syrian officials said that oil operations in the Dayr Azzawr area, where most of Syria's oilfields are located, were running normally.

Rabin to visit Seoul, Tokyo

SEOUL (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will visit Seoul Dec. 14-17, becoming the first Israeli head of government to visit South Korea, an official announcement said Monday. Before coming to Seoul, Mr. Rabin is to visit Japan Dec. 12-14 for talks with Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama, Japan's Foreign Ministry said. It also will be the first visit to Japan by an Israeli prime minister. Mr. Rabin will confer with South Korean President Kim Young-Sam on the situation in Northeast Asia and the Middle East, chief presidential spokesman Choe Don-Shik said. During Mr. Rabin's stay, the two countries will sign an aviation agreement to open direct flights between their capitals, transportation ministry officials said. Israel and South Korea established formal diplomatic ties in 1962 but their relations have been bumpy because of Seoul's relations with Arab countries. The two countries withdrew their diplomats in the 1970s, Israel reopened its embassy in Seoul early this year but South Korea has yet to reciprocate.

Pollard remains threat to security — CIA says

WASHINGTON (AP) — Convicted Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard, who is eligible for parole next year, has tried to reveal classified information from prison and remains a security risk, according to Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) documents. "He retains the ability to harm our national security because of his intelligence, his power of recollection, his history of significant emotional instability, his history of drug abuse and his overriding loyalty to another country," the agency wrote in documents cited in Monday's edition of Defence Week, a weekly newsletter that covers the defence industry. The declassified documents were provided to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which asked the CIA and the Defence Intelligence Agency to assess the potential national security damage if Mr. Pollard were released, the newsletter said. Mr. Pollard's attorney, Theodore Olson, responded that the CIA's accusations of drug abuse and continued attempts to reveal classified information are unfounded. Mr. Pollard, a former navy intelligence analyst, was sentenced to life in prison in 1987 after pleading guilty to

selling secrets to Israel. He admitted selling classified information to Israel from 1984 until his arrest in November 1985, receiving as much as \$2,500 a month. President Clinton refused to reduce Mr. Pollard's sentence last year.

Former G.E. manager sentenced for fraud

CINCINNATI (AFP) — A former General Electric (GE) manager who plotted to divert millions of dollars in U.S. defence contracts to Israel has been sentenced to seven years in prison. Herbert B. Steindler, who was GE's international sales manager, apologised for his actions at Friday's sentencing but U.S. District Judge Carl Rubin was unmoved. Mr. Steindler, 55, of Melbourne, Florida, pleaded guilty in July to conspiracy, wire fraud, money laundering and use of the mail in racketeering, and agreed to repay \$1.7 million to the U.S. government. He was convicted in connection with a scheme to divert \$11 million from G.E. contracts with the U.S. government to supply jet engines to Israel. The scheme ran between 1984 and 1990. A former Israeli army general was convicted in Israel for his involvement in the scheme in 1991 while G.E. paid \$69 million in fines, penalties and damages.

Death sentences sought in tourist slayings

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's military prosecutor on Monday called for the death penalty for four suspected extremists accused of killing a German tourist and two Egyptians. Two of the men are at large. The attack occurred Sept. 28 in the Red Sea resort of Hurghada. Another German and an Egyptian were wounded in the shooting on the crowded street. The prosecutor also called for harsh prison sentences for 12 other suspected militants implicated in planning the attack. Four of them are at large. Foreign reporters and Egyptian reporters with foreign news organisations have been banned from the trial on grounds the coverage distorts Egypt's image abroad. The case against the 16 defendants opened Nov. 5 and is expected to conclude by the end of this month, according to a military official who spoke on condition of anonymity. The defence is to begin Tuesday.

Palestinian minister visits France

PARIS (AFP) — The culture minister of the Palestinian authority was due to arrive in France on Monday for a week-long visit concentrating on problems of education in the newly-autonomous territories, officials said. Yasser Abed Rabbo, minister for culture and arts, will also discuss Franco-Palestinian cultural cooperation with French officials during the visit, the foreign ministry announced. During the trip, which comes amid heightened tension in the Gaza Strip following clashes last week which left 18 dead, he will meet Culture Minister Jacques Toubon as well as senior officials at the foreign ministry. Foreign ministry spokesman Richard Dugue said the latest clashes would not influence France's continuing support for the Palestinian authority.